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# VISVA-BHARATI NEWS

Volume VII

JULY, 1938

Number I



## Santiniketan and Sriniketan

Gurudeva is still staying at Kalimpong. He is maintaining his improvement in health.

...

The Government of Bengal have offered to award through Visva-Bharati six scholarships of Rs. 20/- each to students taking advanced training in Bengali Music at our Sangit-Bhavana. Of these scholarships, one will be reserved for Muslims, one for scheduled castes, and one for girls; and the remaining three will be open to competition.

The scholarships have been advertised in the newspapers inviting applications from talented students.

...

The Calcutta University results of the Matriculation and B. A. candidates from our institution have been satisfactory. There have been cent per cent passes in both of these examinations. In the Matriculation, all the four candidates were placed in the First Division. In the B. A. Examination, of the fourteen candidates, all of whom have passed, one has secured Honours in Economics, (K. M. Reddy) and another Distinction. The Intermediate Examination results have not been as satisfactory. In Arts, two have passed in the First Division, three in the Second, and two in the Third. In Science, two have passed in the First Division, two in the Second, and three in the Third.

...

New admissions to the different departments, this session, bid fair to be

beyond our expectation. Applications, so far registered, show that all the available seats in the Kala-Bhavana, Sangit-Bhavana and Patha-Bhavana will be filled up. Taking the probables into consideration, it seems Siksha-Bhavana also will have an expected number of new entrants. Inspite of the recent extension of the Sree-Bhavana, there will be an overflow this year too. The increasing demand for seats in our Girls' Hostel indicate that arrangements for girls' education at Santiniketan are being appreciated by the public. And the authorities of Santiniketan will have to consider a further extension of the Sree-Bhavana in order to meet the growing demand.

...

Hironkumar Sanyal, M. A., who was for a few years a Lecturer in Economics in the City College, Calcutta, and was Editor of the Bengali Co-operative Journal "Bhandar", has joined our Siksha-Bhavana as an adhyapaka in Economics. He is also a well-known writer in Bengali.

Phanibhusan Adhikari, M. A., till recently the Head of the Department of Indian Philosophy, Benares Hindu University, has joined our Vidya-Bhavana as Adhyapaka of Indian Philosophy.

We offer our cordial welcome to both of them.

Chandrajit Rajkumar of Manipur has been appointed a teacher of Dancing in the Sangit-Bhavana.

## To The People of China \*

Your neighbouring nation which is largely indebted to you for the gift of your cultural wealth and therefore should naturally cultivate your comradeship for its own ultimate benefit, has suddenly developed a virulent infection of imperialistic rapacity imported from the West and turned the great chance of building the bulwark of a noble destiny in the East into a dismal disaster. Its loud bluster of power, its ruthless orgy of indiscriminate massacre of life, demolition of education centres, its callous defiance of all civilised codes of humanity has brought humiliation upon the modern spirit of Asia that is struggling to find its honoured place in the fore-front of modern age. It is all the more unfortunate because some of the proud powers of the west, tottering under the burden of their bloated prosperity, are timidly condoning the blood-sodden politics of the standard-bearers of their own highly reputed civilisation, humbly bending their knees at the altar of indecent success that has blasted some time-honoured citadel of sacred human rights.

At this desperate age of moral upset it is only natural for us to hope that the continent which has produced the two greatest men, Buddha and Christ, in the whole course of human events, must still fulfil its responsibility to maintain the purest expression of character in the teeth of the scientific effrontery of the evil genius of man. Has not that expec-

tation already shown its first luminous streak of fulfilment in the person of Gandhi in a historical horizon obscured by centuries of indignity? However, Japan has cynically refused its own great possibility, its noble heritage of 'bushido' and has offered a most painful disillusionment to us in an unholy adventure through which even some apparent success of hers is sure to bend down to the dust, loaded with a fatal burden of failure.

Our only consolation lies in the hope that the deliberate aggression of violence that has assailed your country will bear a sublime meaning in the heroic suffering it causes in a promise of the birth of a new soul of the nation. You are the only great people in the world who never had the snobbishness of extolling the military power as one of the glorious characteristics of national spirit, and when the same brute force of militarism with its hideous efficiency has overtaken your country we pray with all our heart that you may come out of this trial once again to be able to justify your trust in the true heroism of higher humanity in this cowardly world ready to prove traitor to its own best ideals. Even if a mere physical success be immediately missed by you yet your moral gain will never be lost and the seeds of victory that are being sown through this terrible struggle in the depth of your being will over and over again prove their deathlessness.

Rabindranath Tagore

\* The full text of the message Gurudeva sent to Director of Cheena-Bhavana.

Marshal Chiang Kai-Shek through Prof. Tan Yun-Shan,

## Impressions Abroad

Dhirendramohan Sen

### **The Elmhirsts and Dartington Hall**

Few of us can have failed to hear something of Leonard and Dorothy Elmhirst. In their own country they are known not only as original thinkers but as bold pioneers who are adventurous enough to translate their visions into practical achievement. They had little hesitation to put their resources into Dartington Hall, the most remarkable experiment in the countryside since the War. A number of other progressive enterprises also is supported and guided by them. The International Association of Agricultural Economics, the independent research organisation known as 'Political Economic Planning' (more popularly as P. E. P.) , the unique experiment in human health at the Pioneer Health Centre, Peckham, London are all connected with their names along with Dartington Hall. The tie with Sriniketan need hardly be mentioned. Dorothy Elmhirst is wellknown in the United States for her support of the arts and as chief proprietor of the 'New Republic' and 'Asia'. But for the enthusiasm of this couple "The Journey's End" might not have seen the light of the day.

Hospitality is a feature of the Elmhirsts' household. Hardly a week passes when Dartington is not visited by eminent men and women. They may come from any part of the earth; this week you meet a Chinese Professor and the next may bring you in contact with a Russian Dramatist. American and

European continents seem to be in the close neighbourhood of Dartington Hall. The Visitors' Book at the Hall is an interesting document. The unobtrusive personality of Dorothy Elmhirst permeates through every endeavour at Dartington. I shall not attempt to give a systematic account of the activities there. The enterprise is varied and complex. It could hardly have a better setting. About three thousand acres of undulating and picturesque Devon, girdled by the rivulet Dart, dotted with dark ancient woodlands and well-planned modern buildings provide an inspiring site for any enterprise which is out to challenge the smug self-sufficiency of modern urban civilisation. Farming, Fruitgrowing, Cider making, Nursery Gardens, Saw Mills, Furniture Making, Weaving, etc. are items on the one hand; on the other there are the Nursery School, the Boarding School, the Training School and the Arts Department consisting of Joos Leder School of Dance, the Chekhov Theatre Studio and the nucleus of a School of Music. At Dartington Hall, the economists, the scientists and a few other creative minds keep awake the research spirit of the organisation. In Leonard Elmhirst's own words "Our aims can be grouped under two heads—economic, in relation to the estate; and cultural, that is, educational and social in relation to the particular community on and around the estate . . . . People often ask—if a boarding school,

why an estate ? If a well-run estate, why a school ? or an arts department ? The answer is that for any experiment with any estate, proper educational and cultural services are essential to a decent life and that, at present, neither of those in Britain are ordinarily of a kind or of a quality that will guarantee a recognizable culture to any rural or, for that matter, urban area. Any visitor must be prepared, then, to consider which activities at Dartington Hall are peculiar to a first experiment, and which might or should be standard equipment for any similar undertaking." "The two most disrupting forces in rural life to-day are the development of agricultural machinery - with its capacity to displace men—and the pull of revived industry and urban services upon a low-paid rural population, and especially upon their children. One of the questions we ask at Dartington is, Can we so raise wages and improve conditions as to prevent a rural community in a good farming area being broken down in this fashion ? We approach the problem in two ways. One is by enlarging the unit of land and stock so that more men are employed with better prospects and with decent wages and conditions. The other is by trying to establish on the estate industrial units that would be ordinarily in the town.

The Textile Department runs two mills, the original one at Dartington and an additional one in a rural area a hundred miles distant. It was the intention from the beginning to base other rural units on the Dartington one, and as time goes on and the demand for our cloth continues we shall be forced to open still further units: we are still placing orders outside for cloth made to our standards and specifications in order to satisfy the rush demands of

some of our special customers. We have found our own solutions for the special problems of scouring, dyeing, carding, spinning, weaving, finishing and tentering on our scale and to our standards, and the quality and design of the cloth produced are rapidly creating a demand.

The sawmill, roughly speaking, has made money on the timber it manufactures but lost money on the timber it hauls and saws and sells as plank. Already thirty per cent. of its output is manufactured on the spot, and this proves to be sound economics. One more year should see the mill well established.

In both instances it was not until we concentrated upon the marketing end and allowed it to dictate backwards to production that we began to see daylight. Rural industry and agriculture have existed for so long upon bargain-hunting, both in their buying and marketing, that it takes time and trouble to break through old habits.

The total annual turnover of the estate enterprises, apart from building and school activities, has increased at the rate of £12,000 a year for the last four years, and now amounts to £9000 inter-estate sales and £70,000 sales to the outer world."

Reviewing the work of a decade, Mr. Elmhirst reiterates "In essence, I do not think that our ideals have altered, but, from seeing to be more or less visionary, they have become embodied in a wide variety of activities with implications to-day that, naturally, were not apparent at the outset. For instance, in the late summer of 1926, when we started, the whole staff for estate and school experiments was housed in two buildings, and there were but three cottages for labourers, each with

its own well down the road and its own earth closet up the garden path and no bath. Today our resident population, to which we supply water, drainage, light and power, numbers some 350 persons."

"Can we state with confidence any definite general conclusions arising from the experience of the first ten years? If we have not yet solved all our problems, we have at least come to a much clearer realization of their nature and of the means by which their solution may be attained. We have been confirmed in our belief that an estate such as this, combining agriculture and husbandry with industries for dealing with the raw materials of the countryside, is economically feasible, provided that the types of enterprise are carefully chosen in relation to the locality, that the scale of each is large enough for economic working, and that the managers are helped in every possible way to obtain specialized advice and assistance on the technical, the economic and the psychological aspects of their departments. The question of scale of unit is an important one. We have found in the case of several of our departments that the most practicable operating size is somewhat larger than what we first had in mind. Vital from the outset is the need to have a very clear and detailed knowledge of the marketing situation, and to study consumer's need and preference so that production may definitely be related to demand. Of the social benefits of grouping such a wide variety of enterprises in a rural area we have no doubt at all."

A casual visitor may get lost in the complexity of the enterprise but he cannot fail being impressed that the spirit in which it has been carried out is rare.

#### **Prof. Lesny in Prague.**

There are many among us who still remember with affection Prof. Lesny of the National University, Prague. In appearance he is nearly the same minus his beard. He is now Dean of the Arts Faculty of the University and a leading figure in Prague. For Gurudev and Santiniketan he cherishes an affection, which is rare. Prof. Lesny was giving a course of lectures at the Oriental Institute, when I visited Prague at the end of January, 1938. I was present in one of the lectures, though it was in Czech. He spoke for over an hour: the theatre which was full, listened with quiet attention to every word he said. His book on Gurudev is one of the most popular publications in Czechoslovakia. It was being translated into English and Messrs. Allen & Unwin have undertaken charge of the English edition. In one of the dinner parties, arranged by Prof. Lesny, I met the English writer who was translating the work. He has spent most of his life in Prague. Prof. Lesny made all he could to make my stay at Prague both pleasant and useful. At his suggestion the Central organisation of 'Sokol' physical culture, which played a large part in the regeneration of Czechoslovakia, took me round the various organisations and their activities. He is very keen that there should be definite lines of co-operation between his country and India through Visva-Bharati. As the President of Indo-Czechoslovak Society he arranged a reception, where he made me talk of the recent growth of our institution. If the political horizon clears, we may expect to have Prof. Lesny among us again next winter.

#### **The Friends.**

Of the societies abroad, which take an

earnest interest in our work, perhaps the Friends are the foremost. There is much in common in faith and aspirations between them and ourselves. I had the opportunity of meeting Carl Heath, Edmund Harvey, M. P., Alexander Wilson and Horace Alexander. They are taking the lead to find ways and means to start a foundation for a chair to represent their culture at Santiniketan. In this connection I was asked to go up to Selly Oak, Birmingham to meet some of the Friends, who were interested in the project. I spent a delightful afternoon as the guest of Edmund Harvey on the terrace of the House of Commons. Mr. Harvey gave me his reminiscences of Santiniketan. What a deep regard he showed for our Institution —all that it has been doing and aspiring after! This quiet friend of ours might have passed through the Asrama barely noticed yet there was in his heart an everlasting affection for Santiniketan. The Friends House, London and Selly Oak, Birmingham,

have a real international outlook and an international atmosphere. Their co-operation will add to our strength in building up human fellowship, when there is so much racial antagonism in ferment in our country and abroad.

The question of refugees in present-day Europe is a melancholy phenomenon. Yet it is not without its silver lining. It has revealed some of the rare qualities of human heart. The zeal and determination of individuals and humanitarian societies have proved almost equal to the enormity of the task. Behind the scene there is a story of untiring organisation, unusual sacrifice and a profound regard for man as man. Countess Kristine Hamilton has been one of those whose entire time and resources went to the cause. The incessant hard work that it entailed, brought her very near to the verge of a breakdown. In April she was obliged to give up work and take rest in Denmark.

### Alumni News

We regret to announce the death of Dr. Miss Hiraumoyee Sen, M. B., which melancholy event took place in Calcutta on the 26th June last. The late Miss Sen was one of the earliest of women students here having joined Santiniketan nearly 30 years ago. She had served in Nepal as a Medical Officer and at the time of her death was working in charge of the K. D. M. S. hospital at Laheria-Sarai in Bihar. May her soul rest in peace !

Hardly had the printing of this issue of the "News" been completed when we received telegraphic information about the passing away of our dear friend and valued colleague Maulana Ziauddin at Amritsar on Sunday, the third of July of Typhoid. Socially and academically, he leaves behind a void which it will be impossible for us to fill up.

**HINDI TRANSLATIONS**

OF

**Poet Rabindranath Tagore's Works.**

The copyright of the Bengali works of Rabindranath Tagore and their translations in Hindi belongs to Visva-Bharati and the authorities of the Visva-Bharati have purchased the stock in hand of all Hindi translations of Rabindranath Tagore's works from the Prabasi Office which was authorised by the author to publish Hindi translations. The Hindi works are now being printed and published by the Publishing Department of the Visva-Bharati and will be available at the Visva-Bharati Book-Shop, 210, Cornwallis Street, Calcutta.

The Publishing Department of the Visva-Bharati has also arranged for publication of a series of authorised translations of the Poet's works in Hindi from original Bengali.

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# VISVA-BHARATI NEWS

Volume VII

AUGUST, 1938

Number II

## In Memory of Ziauddin

Time was when at moments of leisure,  
you would quietly come to me  
and with the usual gesture of welcome  
I would ask you to take your seat.

There would be but a few simple words exchanged,  
and enquiries after health and home,  
leaving behind them love unexpressed.

Now that I miss  
those comings and goings  
I know how immense the emptiness  
is in the loss of such casual intercourse,  
while I fail to find words as simple as a knife thrust  
to express its pain.

With noon-tide of youth,  
you set adrift full of rich merchandise  
your freshly fashioned boat of adventure.

Perhaps its worth  
is too modest to force an abiding place  
in the memory of man.

And such niggardliness of fate  
     makes my mind rebellious.  
 Is there no reckoning, I ask,  
     anywhere in this wide world  
     of the value of that which is not too obvious  
         in its glamour ?

My pen struggles in vain  
     to prove the great meaning  
         of your generous friendliness.

Fame makes its payments in loud rewards  
     to the wielders of the pen and sword,  
     the sycophants of the court.  
         and the makers of money.

But you only had your priceless gift  
     of a genial response and simple love,  
     the tender remembrance of which in friendly souls  
     —even while being worn in time—  
         is for the moment  
             a truer fame for you.

Today in the midsummer sadness of rains  
     drop from the neighbourhood of dripping leaves  
     the white jasmines  
         that have bestowed their all  
         in a beautiful carelessness of magnanimity,  
 and I feel  
     how their fragrant sighs  
         breathe a note of despair  
             that you are no more !

Santiniketan,  
 July 9, 1938.

*Rabindranath Tagore*

## Santiniketan and Sriniketan.

✓ Gurudeva returned to Santiniketan on the 5th July from Kalimpong where he had been during the summer recess. On the 23rd he again left for Calcutta, from where he returned on the 31st.

...

The Hon'ble Mr. Shaheed Suhrawardy, Minister, Local Self-Government of Bengal, arrived at Santiniketan on the 9th July in the evening and left on the 11th July in the morning.

He visited all the departments of Visva-Bharati both at Santiniketan and Sriniketan. He also made a trip to the neighbouring village of Bandgora to inspect the dispensary run by our Health Society. He showed keen and appreciative interest and remarked as follows:—

"The people of Bolpur have reason to be eternally grateful to the authorities of Santiniketan and Sriniketan for the Health Centres that have been opened by them and the rural reconstruction work that they are carrying on. The Co-operative Health Societies have succeeded in enlisting the co-operation of the people not merely in the distribution of medicine, but also in improving their own living conditions. They have cleaned tanks, cut drains, maintained roads, cleared jungles, filled up hollows, and have practically eradicated all the causes of malaria. A very efficient and self-sacrificing medical practitioner is the pivot of the organisation, and only the best can stand up to the strain. The movement has been so successful that I hope that it will gradually extend itself so as to cover the malaria-stricken

spots of Bolpur, and I trust that the people of the locality as well as the Government will support the movement to the best of their ability. There is also a co-operative rural reconstruction movement side by side in many places, and this has succeeded in arousing the consciousness of the people to the need for self-help in solving their various problems. The work which is done here could very well have been adopted in other parts of Bengal, and is now making its influence felt throughout the Province. I am sure that in course of time its principles will be accepted and adopted by other Rural Reconstruction Societies. I wish the organisers every success."

He was accompanied by his brother Prof. Suhrawardy of the Calcutta University who, it may be remembered, was with us here in 1932 for a period as a Visiting Lecturer.

...

We would like to draw the notice of our readers to Visva-Bharati Bulletin No. 25 by Rathindranath Tagore, which deals with the scheme of "Health Co-operatives" working under the auspices of our Institute of Rural Reconstruction, Sriniketan. "The Scheme is still in an experimental stage and it is too early to judge the results. But our experience, though confined to a limited number of years, has been sufficient to encourage us to place the scheme in its entirety before the public as deserving serious consideration."

...

(Continued on page 15.)

## Maulana Ziauddin.

A research scholar always runs the risk of, sooner or later, being imprisoned in his own isolation; hence, the utter urgency of his applying the antidote of intimate association with, and understanding of, the other aspects of human culture, besides the one which is the special object of his attention and investigation. Maulana Ziauddin, head of the Islamic Department of the Visva-Bharati, who passed away on July 3, at Amritsar, was ever aware of, and on his guard against, this subtle danger in specialization with its attendant segmentation of truth. This is why his genius flowered forth in various fields of thought and his humanity was never allowed to be buried under books.

Maulana Ziauddin was by temperament, taste and talents a poet. He composed many poems and songs in Urdu and occasionally in Persian, too, when once on coming into contact with the spirit of Santiniketan his faculties found a stimulus and a scope. He often sang some of these to the writer in a voice vibrant with the emotion and *elan* of the creator. A few of these were, later on, published in the leading periodicals of the North, to which at times he contributed also essays on a variety of themes. The climax of his achievement in this direction was reached not only in his masterly translations of a hundred select poems of Rabindranath Tagore from the original into Urdu and Persian, which were afterwards published in book form under the titles of *Kalam-i-Tagore* and *Sadbands-i-Tagore* respectively, but in his

story and songs for the talkie, *Kisan-Kanya*, which had a run of weeks in prominent places like Bombay and Karachi.

Then the poet became the pundit. He wrote a *Monograph on Moslem Calligraphy* which, in addition to being a piece of historical research and writing, bears testimony to the author being an artist as well, such sensitiveness to beauty does it reveal in his selection of the specimens of penmanship. He, further, edited a *Grammar of the Braj Bhakha*, which has been published, and a *Dictionary* of the same language, which is ready for being sent to the press. These afford a striking proof of his capacity for taking pains and for being precise. He had in hand two other books dealing with Hindu contribution to Persian literature and with the history of Moslems in India. A few months before he breathed his last he had started writing in Urdu a novel relating to the rural sights and scenes and sufferings of India; but, alas! only a few chapters could be completed. In the opinion of those who are competent to judge, this novel, when completed, would have taken rank alongside the masterpieces among Urdu novels.

The poet in the Maulana was greater than the pundit in him and so he was a fellow-pilgrim of everyone on the path of enquiry into the Truth of Man. His memory will abide as long as that path persists, for the path and the path-treader are one.

G. M.

## An Open-Air School\*

C. F. Andrews

### I

If I were to make a full confession to you at this present moment, here in Central Africa, and were to tell you what is in my inmost heart, you would find, hidden deep down there, an inextinguishable longing to be away from the tumult and the strife of tongues, in which for months past my life seems to have become involved, and to be back again once more, beneath the *sal*-trees and the mango-groves of Santiniketan, where the children sing their songs and play their games and do their work; where the spirit of peace and beauty reigns supreme; where the open sky is spread out over our heads, in all its infinite mystery, with its sunrises and sunsets, with its full moonlit beauty at night, and those wonderful dark purple evenings, when the stars come out one by one and seem to stoop down to earth to whisper their secrets into the ears of mortal men.

Words cannot picture to you the beauty of Santiniketan. Our own Poet and Teacher, whom we call Gurudeva has named it in his song, 'The darling of our hearts'; and it is worthy of the name. All who have visited the Ashram, old and young alike, have felt its inner beauty growing more and more upon them.

I feel sure in my own mind that the spiritual presence of such saintly lives as those of Maharishi Devendranath Tagore, the father of the Poet, who lived there during the closing years of his life,

and of the Poet's eldest brother, Borodada, the philosopher and sage, Dwijendranath Tagore, pervades our Ashram, even when the bodily form departs. We find in England, in the beautiful valley where the ruined walls of Tintern Abbey still remain, something of this same sacredness, which can be almost felt, a beauty of the inner world as well as of the outer scene. Wordsworth felt it, and this sense of a spiritual presence inspired one of his most perfect poems.

### II

There are stories already told about Santiniketan, which will one day be legends among the Bengal village people,—how the Maharishi, long years ago, came to the spot just as the sun was setting; how he sat beneath the two *chhattim*-trees, which were covered with white flowering creepers, and meditated upon God, while silent night came down over the open plain. When the moon appeared in all her splendour, he was still rapt in prayer. Even at the time when the morning sun rose, the Maharishi was still seated. His heart, all through that wakeful night, had been filled to overflowing with the joy of the love of God. He said to himself, 'This is my place of rest, the end of my pilgrimage.' And he remained there, year after year. He gave to the spot its present name, Sautiniketan, the Home of Peace.

Another story runs, how the captain of a band of robbers came to the place, thinking that some Sadhu had secretly

\* We are grateful to a friend who has sent us this address which was given by Mr. Andrews in Uganda, Central Africa, a few years ago. Ed.

buried there a hidden treasure: and when he saw the peace and heavenly radiance of the Maharishi's face, he fell at his feet and asked forgiveness and became the Maharishi's disciple, serving him faithfully to the end.

Such stories carry with them their own inner meaning. They make known

to us the fact that the resting places of the saints of God are hallowed by the presence of immortal joy. As the Upanishads have said: 'God manifests Himself in immortal forms of joy,'—that joy which is Love's ultimate expression.

( *To be continued.* )

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### Alumni Abroad

The name of Bibliophile, the little bookshop at 16 Little Russel Street, W.C. 1, London, is familiar to most Indians in London. It was started in a modest manner by Dr. Sasadhar Sinha, B. Sc., Ph.D. Econ. (Lond.) a few years back. It is a full-fledged concern now which supplies books of every kind, practically all over the world. Bibliophile is more of an institution than a mere bookshop. Fresh students are always coming for guidance to S. Sinha, who has been at the London University and who has acquired a mine of information regarding University life in England, through his long stay in that country. He is the same unassuming man today, as he used to be while he was at Santiniketan. Young sociologists, economists, educationists and politicians gather to discuss never-ending

problems and Sinha is always there at the background, until he is referred to. Often tea goes round free of cost to moisten the throat of the enthusiastic debators. All these go on in the friendly atmosphere of the room—business and club life hand in hand. Bibliophile grows steadily.

...

Durga Prasad Pandey, our junior 'Panditji', has settled down in Leiden for his doctorate degree in Archaeology. He has won the affection of his professors; he is a part-time paid lecturer in Pali and Hindi in the University. He has made many good friends. Panditji is always keen on giving a good account of our institution through his person and activities. As Prof. Vogel is soon to retire, he calls Panditji his youngest kid.

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A Fund has been inaugurated at Santiniketan for receiving contributions towards rendering financial help to the

family of the late Maulana Ziauddin. All donations will be gratefully acknowledged by the Secretary, Santiniketan.

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## An Indian Artist in London.\*

"At India House today Sir William Llewellyn opened an exhibition of paintings, drawings, and prints by Mr. Ramendra Nath Chakravorty, a pupil and disciple of Rabindranath Tagore and head assistant teacher at the Government School of Art in Calcutta. In sponsoring the exhibition, the India Society is continuing its policy of showing to English people how contemporary Indian artists are tackling the problem of expressing contemporary Indian life.

Mr. Chakravorty is versatile not only in his use of media but also in his choice of subjects. Traditionally Oriental in his use of line and flat colour, he is by no

means traditional in his sympathetic way of depicting scenes from everyday life in India. Boys and girls at play, gipsies in their encampments, and domestic scenes are just as much his subjects as the more usual religious or mythological themes. Sir Muirhead Bone paid a warm tribute to the artist at the opening, pointing out that art marched on through the artist's love of the ordinary things of life. Since coming to England, Mr. Chakravorty has found time to look at the ordinary things of London life too. There are aquatints of Hampstead Heath and of a London fog in Camden Town."

\* We have already informed our readers that Ramendranath Chakravarty is now in England where he has gone on study leave. Recently he held an Exhibition of his paintings in London which drew considerable attention of the connoisseurs of the Fine Arts. The above extract is from the *The Manchester Guardian*, Friday June 17, 1938.

(Continued from page 11).

<sup>v</sup> Srijukta Kamala Devi has made the gift of a thousand rupees towards the erection of a pavilion for the Cha-Chakra ( Teacher's Tea Club ). The pavilion is to be named after her husband, our late lamented Dinu Babu. The asrama is grateful for the gift. There are also several smaller donations received for the same purpose from friends and ex-students, for all of which we acknowledge our gratitude.

...  
<sup>c</sup> With the opening of the new session and the poet's return from Kalimpong, there had been a regular influx of visitors

Prominent among these were Mr. H. V. Kamath, Sj. Uday Sankar and Col. A. C. Chatterji, Director of Public Health, Bengal. Col. Chatterji very kindly addressed the students on "Public and Personal Hygiene."

Hiran Kumar Sanyal has been appointed an Adhyapaka of Economics in the Siksha-Bhavana.

...  
 Anil Kumar Chanda has left for Orissa on special deputation and during his leave on deputation Prafulla Kumar Sen, M. A. will act as an Adhyapaka of Political Science in the Siksha-Bhavana.

## HINDI TRANSLATIONS

OF

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# VISVA-BHARATI NEWS

Volume VII

SEPTEMBER, 1938

Number III



Linocut by Jayanta Desai.

## Santiniketan and Sriniketan.

With intervals of slight indisposition Gurudeva has been keeping quite fit even though the climate is rather trying this season. He had a busy time last month. Besides completing his popular treatise on Bengali language he has just composed a comic drama styled মুক্তির উপায় or the *Way to Salvation*. The latter is a hilarious play based on one of his short stories of the same name. He has delivered two extempore addresses. The one delivered to the newly admitted students of Santiniketan appears in the current issue of *Visva-Bharati Quarterly*.

...

Mr. S. C. Mitter, Director of Industries, Bengal, paid a visit to Sriniketan in the course of the last month. He was deeply impressed by the work that is being done by our Rural Industries and Crafts Section. He has very kindly promised to make a capital grant of Rs. 2,000/-and a recurring one of Rs. 3,000/- for further improvement. In this connection we would like to inform our readers that the Hall of Industries is shortly to be extended to include a pottery section.

...

Despite the rains we had a number of distinguished visitors among whom were the following: Prof. H. C. Tao, Director, National Association for the Advancement of Education in China, Dr. J. J. Lelek, Acting Consul-General for Czechoslovakia in India, Mr. J. N. Rattray of the Friends of India Society in London and Dr. Jenkins, Special Educational Officer to the Government of Bengal. The last

named gave an interesting discourse to our students on the danger of mass-movements in the field of education.

...

As usual we had a number of visiting teams from Calcutta for friendly football matches. We have kept up our old tradition and acquitted ourselves well. Honours were even in two matches and the other two we won outright.

...

We accord our heartiest welcome to the following :—Bhadra Roy, trained nurse and midwife, Sontosh Chandra Pratihar, M. A., teacher of Bengali, Pathabhabava, and Birendranath Barui, graduate of the Faridpur Mission Technical School, teacher of Carpentry, Pathabhabava. All three were appointed last month.

...

Prosad Memorial School at Bhubandanga is connected with the name of the late Prosad Chatterjee—better known as Mulu—son of Sj. Ramananda Chatterjee and ex-student of Santiniketan. On the occasion of Prosad's eighteenth death anniversary Sj. Chatterjee has donated a sum of Rs. 25/-to the School. We would like to mention here that some of our Bengali Students have taken over the charge of the night classes of the School.

...

Our Autumn recess is near at hand. Holidays are from the 25th September to the 29th October, both days inclusive.

...

( Continued on page 29 )

### A Song \*

In my room  
where the shadows of July have deepened,  
my time passes gathering  
past sorows from my memory  
and idly weaving them into a song,  
while keeping my hope wakeful  
for the footsteps of the coming guest  
of my desolate hours of night.

In the forest  
resonant with the symphony of showers,  
the leaves murmur in a sad monotone,  
the flowers are listless.

And a doubt sends a thrill of pain  
into my heart,  
whispering that he may not come  
my beloved of the lonely night of July.

---

\* Translated by Gurudeva himself from one of his original Bengali songs.

## An Open-Air School

(Continued)

C. F. Andrews.

If I were to describe to you one day in the Ashram with the boys, that would perhaps best bring home to you its inner beauty. Long before sunrise, like the birds in our own *Amloki* groves, our boys are awake. The choristers are the first to rise, and they go round the Ashram, singing their morning hymn. You can hear their voices in the distance, drawing nearer and nearer, and then the sound dies away as the choir passes on to another part of Ashram. Then again it comes nearer and nearer. The beauty of the sound of children's voices in the still morning air, and the sense of joy and reverence which they bring, give peace to the soul.

After an interval, each boy takes his *asan*,—his square of carpet,—into the fields and sits down on it to meditate in his own place alone. Later on, before the school-work begins, the boys all stand together in the shade of the trees and chant their hymn to God.

Till about half-past ten, the work of the school goes on. We have no class rooms. The boys sit with their teachers, in the open air, under the trees. There are no large classes. A group of eight or ten boys will be seated round the teacher, asking him questions. Very few books are used. Like the open air education which Plato loved in Athens, the greater part is carried on through conversation. The boys soon learn to bring all their difficulties to their teachers; and the teachers get keenly interested in the boys'

questions and answers. Such living education can never be dull.

When the morning work is over, the boys bathe and go to their meal. Then follows a time of rest. About two o'clock in the afternoon the school classes begin again; but during this period the work is chiefly with the hand as well as with the mind. Handiwork is practised and each boy's own natural tastes are very soon discovered. Some prefer mechanical work; others enjoy spinning and weaving; others become skilled draughtsmen or painters; others are musicians.

There is very little book-work in the afternoon. School is over at about four o'clock, and then there is a rush to get first into the open fields for football. Our Santiniketan boys are famous everywhere for their sports and games. In the evening, at sunset, they return from the fields and sit down once more for a short time to meditate in silence before they take their evening meal.

As night comes on, fairy stories are told; short dramas are recited; our Gurudeva's songs are sung; and the different school-gatherings are held.

By nine o'clock, all are glad to retire to rest; and again the choristers go round the Ashram singing their last evening hymn before sleep comes at last. There can be no question as to their happiness. Their faces tell the story of their joy and sense of freedom. There is no happier life in India than that of our children at Santiniketan.

## Sir S. Radhakrishnan's Address.

Sir Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan arrived here on Saturday, the 3rd Sept. noon at the invitation of Gurudeva. He was present along with Gurudeva during the performance of *Parishodh* the same evening. Next morning he addressed the staff and students of Visva-Bharati in the presence of Gurudeva who introduced the speaker.

Sir Sarvapalli began by saying that though he had known the Poet personally for a number of years he was looking forward to meeting him here at Santiniketan, in his own setting, from where he was radiating sweetness and light, strength and joy to millions of his countrymen and others. At a time when the country was smarting under political subjection and economic breakdown he gave us hope by revealing that the greatness of a nation was to be judged by other qualities than economic power and political efficiency. Referring to the letter written by the Poet to Yone Noguchi, Sir Sarvapalli said that the Poet was the voice of the whole civilization even as Gandhi was the conscience of the whole country. Both of them emphasise that the state is only a convenience for providing citizens with economic well-being, cultural opportunity and spiritual life. Modern civilization is a scandal. If after so many centuries of energetic enlightenment men, women and children are being trained in the use of gas masks and streets are being provided with underground refuges, it shows that there is something radically wrong about our society. Through the centuries wars have been a persistent feature of civilized states and they cannot be superseded

until the slave basis of society and exploitation of weaker nations are abandoned.

Pointing out that we should take a long view of history and comparing the short-lived character of the Greek, Roman and Byzantine civilizations with the long-lived civilizations of India and China, Sir Sarvapalli stressed that civilizations based on spiritual values of endurance, suffering, truth and tolerance have the staying power and spiritual vitality. While recognising the urgency of social reconstruction he pointed out that the human mind could not be satisfied with a mere sufficiency of material goods. He appealed for the adoption of a religion based not on dogma or revelation but rooted in personal experience which would have for its effect the spirit of inner freedom and universal love, *abhaya* and *ahimsa*.

✓ Thanking Sir Radhakrishnan Gurudeva said, "I am immensely glad that our students have had this opportunity of coming into personal touch with you and enjoying your marvellous gift of speech and originality of thoughts. I do not wish to spread a shroud of platitudes over the memory of this illuminating address of yours, I only thank you for your kindness in accepting our invitation and coming to see our ashram which I have been building for forty lonely years with inadequate means and scanty public response, tending it mostly v 'h my love and life which may have an abiding value. I have come to the end of my days and I cannot expect very much from my destiny. My only claim is that of an artist who is amply rewarded if he is assured by a visitor like yourself, whose praise is precious, that he has been able to please you."

## Marshal Chiang's Reply to Gurudeva

(Translation)

Respected Gurudeva Tagore,

Prof. Tan Yun-Shan, on his return to China, has brought your esteemed letter to me as well as the message to my people, from which we see that the feeling of justice and humanity is still pervading the wide continent of our two countries. It gives us indeed a strong and forceful assistance in spirit to have such great sympathy and warm encouragement from the Poet-Philosopher of the East, and we are not only deeply grateful to you but also very much elevated by your valuable words.

The Japanese Militarists have not only wantonly invaded China, they have brought with them every species of horror, pillage and massacre and rape of innocent women, and have destroyed all the educational and cultural centres. The most painful thing is that sometimes the Japanese soldiers kill the women very cruelly for another inhuman enjoyment after their wild lust is satisfied. All

these atrocious and evil deeds, entirely against humanity, are a great shame to the spirit of the great continent of Asia, as you said in the message.

All of my people, civil and military, are decided and determined with one mind and one voice, to struggle and fight to the end, not only for the existence of our own nation but also for the peace of the whole world. And we undoubtedly believe that if there is still and justice in this world, China will surely get the ultimate victory.

I eagerly hope you will continually give your noble voice, helping to scour away this great shame of Asia that is still spreading in the Far East.

With my warmest greetings and wishes for your good health.

Yours sincerely,  
(Sd.) Chiang Kai-Shek  
Hankow, China.

14. 7. 38.

(continued from page 18)

Bankim Centenary was celebrated on the 6th August at Santiniketan under the auspices of Sahityika—Students' Bengali Literary Society—with Gurudeva in the chair.

In the course of his presidential address Gurudeva gave a few interesting reminiscences of Bankim, the man and the novelist. He also said that Bankim Chandra might be regarded as a pioneer in more senses than one and that unless we saw him from the proper perspective we might miss assessing his genius in its true light. Bengali literature and language owe him an immense debt of gratitude. His literary journal *Bangadarshan* was a revelation to the younger generation of the day. In conclusion Gurudeva spoke about his personal contact with the novelist and last of all referred to how he had set the *Bande-Mataram* song to tune. Suddenly he burst into song and gave to the audience the first two verses of *Bande-Mataram* in a voice vibrant with emotion.

...

A ceremony was held within the College Hostel compound on Friday, the 2nd Sept. on the occasion of *Grihaprovesha*. Gurudeva and a large number of staff-members and students were assembled and the four new blocks were declared open after the appropriate rites were performed.

...

J Varsha-mangal or Festival of the Rainy Season was held at Sriniketan and Santiniketan on Saturday, the 3rd Sep-

tember. Tree-planting ceremony which took place at Sriniketan attracted a large number of people from neighbouring villages. After the chanting of Vedic hymns Gurudeva explained the significance of the occasion and said, "Realization of our immense debt to Nature and consequent acceptance of her gifts in grateful humility—that should be our spirit on an occasion as this".

About two hundred plants of a large variety of flowers and fruits were distributed free to representatives of different villages. Tree-planting ceremonies were also organised in several different villages by the villagers themselves on the 4th.

*Parisodh* was staged the same evening at Sinha-Sadan. As there was a great rush of visitors that evening and most of our own students could not witness the performance, it had to be repeated on the following evening.

...

Devapriya Mukherji of Patha-bhavana who had the distinction of scoring above 80 percent marks in the aggregate in the last Matriculation examination has been awarded a Government Junior Scholarship for having stood first amongst the candidates of Birbhum district.

...

### Alumni News.

Visva-Bharati Diploma-in-Art have recently been conferred upon Mridula Thaker, Sailesh Deb Varma, Nihar Roy Choudhury, Shukhlal Manilal, Shah, Rameswar Shukla, Kiran Sinha and Selina Vikramaratna. The last four have already been employed as teachers of Art in different parts of India.

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# VISVA-BHARATI NEWS

Volume VII

OCTOBER, 1938

Number IV



By Rani Chanda.

## Santiniketan and Sriniketan.

We are glad to welcome our old colleagues Sjt. and Sjta. Aryanayakam (better known to many of us as Aryamda and Ashadi) who have come here on a brief visit after a long time. Both of them are actively associated with Hindusthani Talimi Sangh and are in that capacity doing useful national work. We wish both joy of their service for the welfare of the nation.

...

We cordially welcome Sukumar Chatterji, formerly Registrar, Co-operative Societies, Bengal who has joined the Rural Reconstruction Department, Sriniketan, on the 20th September.

...

✓ This time there was a second festival of the rainy season—a welcome departure from tradition much appreciated by all of us. Some newly composed rain songs of Gurudeva were sung and a few dance-recitals given. The most pleasing feature of the festival, however, was the recitation of two poems by Gurudeva himself. His voice has lost none of its old ring and magic charm.

...

We are sorry to miss Punyamoy Sen of Siksha-Bhavana and Manilal Patel of Vidya-Bhavana both of whom are away on long leave. The former is now carrying on research work in Botany attached to the Ravenshaw College, Cuttack. The latter whose services have been lent by Visva-Bharati at the request of the Hon'ble Sj. K. M. Munshi, Minister of

Education, Bonbay, will work on the staff of Seth Mungalal's Institute of Sanskrit Studies, Bombay.

...

Sunil Mukherjee, M.Sc., has joined Siksha-Bhavana as a temporary adhyapaka in Botany in place of Punyamoy Sen on leave

...

✓ During the month there was a regular deluge of dramaties of which there were no less than five. *Sacrifice* (in English) was staged by the Sreebhavana girls—a charity performance which was largely attended. The youngsters produced two plays *Picd-Piper* (in English) and *Laxmir Priksha*. On the occasion of Gandhiji's birthday Gurudeva's *Shesh Raksha* was staged by the members of the 'Sahityika.' It would have been strange if the staff-members had remained immune from this general infection. They came more than up to expectation when the dramatised version of a comic story by "Parsuram" was staged by them, with Gurudeva present in the audience.

...

Mr. Nurannabi Chaudhuri, I. C. S., Commissioner of Rural Development, Government of Bengal, visited Sriniketan in the course of the last month. He visited a number of model villages working under our rural reconstruction scheme and addressed a meeting of the village people during his visit.

(Continued on page 31)

## Mahatma Gandhi's Birthday Celebrations.

On the occasion of Mahatma Gandhi's seventeenth birthday a morning service was held in the mandir on Wednesday, the 21st, Sept. A short summary of Gurudeva's address given to the inmates of the ashrama is given below :—

The deeds of great men, however great, are answerable to time, but the dedication that lies behind them remains beyond the reach of temporal standards. Mahatma Gandhi's work has won world recognition, but what is more important for us to realise is the spirit that has given dynamic vitality to his actions. Utter self-giving to Truth, indomitable, fearless, and regardless of consequence—it is this that has invested his life-work with an imperishable significance.

Changing historical circumstances demand constant revaluation of systems, of ideas, and particular traditions: in politics, or in social affairs the process of readjustment continues. But the principle of truth which Mahatma Gandhi has brought into the arena of public affairs must endure. In an era of organised cunning and wholesale dissemination of falsehood Mahatmaji has stood for bare honesty in political negotiations, transcending all details of programme and individual opinions. He has chosen from the outset, the path of character, not of policy.

In the larger sphere of national service, Mahatmaji has brought the same avowal of truth in his dealings with our country's humanity. He has given full worth to our rural population, to oppress-

ed classes, and made us feel that not a few professional politicians but the peoples constitute the foundation of our national existence. I remember an occasion when I had to preside at the Pabna Provincial Conference, in the early days of the Congress. A distinguished politician, who shall remain nameless, openly scoffed at my suggestion that the village people should be given responsibility in shaping their destiny. At that time our faces were turned westward, educated gentlemen were engaged in petulantly refusing favours or in propitiating their masters in the recognised manner. All that has changed. Our peoples have found their dignity in the love that one great soul has brought to them, an immense reservoir of creative power has been tapped, our country is on the move.

To this great soul in a beggar's garb it is our united privilege to offer felicitations on his birthday. I send my homage of loving admiration and the rejoicings of this *ashram* to him on this auspicious occasion.

On the same day an exhibition of arts and crafts was opened at the Kala-bhavana Museum. The exhibition which lasted for four days included a portrait in pen and ink by Gurudeva. On the 22nd Sept. a meeting at Sinha Sadan was addressed by Amiya Chakravarty, Gurdial Mallik and Srijiat Sondhi, a Congress-worker from Bihar. They explained the significance of the occasion and prayed that Mahatmaji might long be spared for the service of the country.

## A Letter

C. F. Andrews

My dearest Gurudev,

This morning the news is so threatening that all my thoughts have gone to you at once in this hour of world crisis leading on to what looks like ultimate disaster.

I know there are evil things which have accompanied British rule in different parts of the world, and acts of violence, even today, which cannot be justified by any sincere lover of humanity. The change made by Mr. Chamberlain, when he sacrificed Mr. Eden for the sake of peace, seemed to me to be one of those surrenders which are continually happening with regard to Abyssinia, or China, or Spain, and we may see others of a similar nature. The British Empire, with its huge portions of unoccupied territory in Canada and Australia, and its feeble resistance to racialism in South Africa and Kenya, makes up a whole system which has money as its superior object rather than justice and truth. The same may be said, in a considerable measure, with regard to British rule in India, if we are honest about our preponderant motive. We have tried to serve God and Mammon. The whole Round Table Conference came back to the commercial and financial aspect again and again rather than the question of what was right and true for the people of India themselves. As you know well, no one could feel these evils in our own system, more deeply than I do; and they weigh more heavily today with me than ever before, because I see them even in the attitude of the British Cabinet itself.

France with its internal dissensions and mercenary outlook is very little different from this aspect of great Britain which I have emphasised. I think Jawaharlal Nehru has not been too severe in condemning this combination of capitalism and imperialism both in its French and British aspects.

There is also the very serious fact that the Sudeten Germans were included in Czechoslovakia purely as a military measure, in order to get a defensible frontier. Old President Masaryk, as a true Christian, was wise enough to press for the Frontier to be drawn further to the South, in spite of Lloyd George and Clemenceau and the military advisers. He warned his own people that there would be danger from this inclusion of unwilling Germans; and the fact that he was over-ruled has gravely weakened the Czech position.

Yet, on the other hand, one can only think of the insolent might of Germany, Italy and Japan as we have witnessed it today, with its final reliance on brutality to gain its end, as something so sinister in the world that to allow it to go on gaining one hollow victory after another seems to be revealing a cowardly weakness on the part of the democratic powers, and a desire to save their own 'possessions'. It shows the worst aspect of the greed which imperialism brings with it, namely, a desire to sit tight on all the money bags if only they can be saved. I know there are other nobler motives, but it is this gross selfishness of capitalism as a system

which hurts me most of all. A far more righteous cause than Czechoslovakia was that of Abyssinia, where all the weakness was on one side and all the justice on the other; yet even if one opportunity after another of standing out for justice has been compromised and lost, I cannot help wondering whether the time has not come, even on a weaker cause, to put a stop to the sheer devilry which Hitler and Mussolini in alliance have meant to the whole world. For I can think of the anti-Jewish persecution in no other terms than these. There the evil is seen at its worst.

I wanted to share these misgivings with you at this moment when the whole picture looks as dark as anything can be. Merely to go on compromising and offering plebiscites, which will be obviously turned by Germany into a 99 per cent. vote for Hitler, may only make matters worse. I see that Paris today is almost ready to suggest this course rather than take up the final challenge. If war comes at last, after all these surrenders, may it not be something far more terrible in its consequences than if the issue was faced at once without any more delay? Certainly nothing could be more wicked than Hitler's

own provocative speech for two hours at Nuremberg, when the whole of Europe was like a gun-powder magazine waiting for a spark to blow up civilization itself!

I know with what agony of inward spirit you yourself must be following each day this spate of telegrams. For you, there is no difference between one people and another, but only the difference between right and wrong, justice and injustice, cruelty and kindness. I remember how you went through that agony at Ramgarh just before the World War in 1914 began, and how the outbreak of that war in August was a horror of great darkness to you as you thought of humanity itself being torn asunder. The nearness of another war, on a far more ghastly scale, must be oppressing you again, and I do hope that you may have been able to find some release from it in your own work, which looks beyond this nightmare of the present into another world, where only the poets and artists can freely enter.

With my dearest love to you,  
Charlie.

Bangalore, Sept. 17, 1938

## A Pilgrimage to Santiniketan \*

By. L A Hogg

A visit to Visva-Bharati, the international university founded by Rabindranath Tagore, is for Calcutta students a great experience. After the crowded classrooms of Calcutta there was a sense of liberation in the wide spaces of

Santiniketan, with views stretching in all directions to the horizon. Wandering at large one came upon classes held in the open air under trees, and at night when the moon rose students walked in procession singing one of the Poet's

\* The above excerpt is reproduced, with the kind permission of the author, from the September issue of *The Young Men of India*.—Ed.

songs. For song and dance have a large place in the education given at Santiniketan, and all the arts are held in honour. The girl students have decorated their hostel with mural painting of their own design, and the art students have covered the outer walls of theirs with reliefs of Indian myths, a bull from Mohenjo-daro, an Assyrian lion, and themes from ancient Egypt and elsewhere. These are modelled in mud and painted over with tar, an experiment to see whether in Bengal, where stone cannot be found, this simple medium will stand the climate. The inspirer of all this creative work is Mr. Nandalal Bose, whose frescoes adorn the library building. His fame is known throughout India, but his heart is in Santiniketan, and he has a welcome ready, as we found out, for any one who cares for the arts.

Another phase of art which was opened to us in Santiniketan was the Hindi folk-song. Simple recreation is the rule here, as the Poet would wish—"Only let me make my life simple and straight, like a flute of reed for thee to fill with music." The songs were first explained to us in English, for we were an audience of many languages, and the singing was accompanied on the esraj and the dotara. Better this than the entertainment to be bought in the city! As the heavenly city has no need of the sun to lighten it, so this 'Abode of Peace' has no need of the cinema or the professional theatre, for the college hall, with its stage, has some new attraction for every night.

The Indian culture which is the prevailing note of Santiniketan offers a welcome to what other lands have to bring. A symbol of that hospitality is

the Chinese library, given by the government of the Chinese Republic, and the presence of a Chinese scholar on the staff adds to its value. We talked with a young professor of English Literature --of Jewish race, born in Russia and educated in Germany until expelled by the Hitler regime, with a doctorate won in Toulouse and a Cambridge degree on top of that, and now giving his varied accomplishments to enrich the education offered to Indian students.

Not only students benefit by the enrichment of life for which Santiniketan stands. At Sriniketan, reached by a walk of two miles, we were shown over the Institute of Rural Reconstruction and watched the arts and crafts which are there being taught—weaving and carpet making, leather work, carpentry, pottery, lacquer, etc. These crafts are bringing new life into the villages round about, and we wondered if something of the kind might not be tried by the Y. M. C. A. in Calcutta for our own bustee boys in their night schools. First we should have to learn a craft ourselves, however, and one of our students asked if he might be allowed to spend his next vacation at Sriniketan to learn leather work.

Leather work of another kind, football in fact, had been the object of our pilgrimage to Santiniketan, and the football match was its central event. A crowd of two or three thousand came together out of nowhere, probably from villages round about, and there was a good number of lady students to back up the Santiniketan players. Only accident could account for the fact that several times the ball was punted right into the midst of the ladies, and they

took it with merriment as part of the discipline of co-education! An interested spectator of the match was one of the professors, Mr. Khitish Roy, who as an ex-hosteller of the Y. M. C. A. was loyally backing his old team. Indeed it was as a Y. M. C. A. player that he paid his first visit to Santiniketan, a visit which led ultimately to his joining the staff. On this occasion the game was keenly contested, with many a hairbreadth escape, but it ended in a draw without scoring. The real goal of our pilgrimage was still to come.

For the last act of this history was a visit to the Poet, Rabindranath Tagore,

the founder of Santiniketan and its presiding spirit. He is now 78 years of age and can no longer walk freely, but his mind is as active as ever and we found him busy writing a one-act play for the students to produce! He asked with interest about the match, joked with the students, and good-naturedly allowed himself to be photographed with the members of the Y. M. C. A. team grouped around him.

Time had now come for our departure, and the railway journey, which had seemed tedious on the way out, was lightened on the return with songs and games that beguiled the hours.

(Continued from page 26)

As usual we shall have our autumn camp at Sriniketan where arrangements will be made to train village people to do rural reconstruction work.

...

### Obituary.

The late Sukumari Devi was one of those few persons in our ashrama who, due to their long and intimate contact, had come to be almost a part of the institution. Her presence was quiet and unobtrusive, and yet, now that she is no more, she leaves behind her a gap which it will be hard to fill.

As a teacher of the handicrafts section of Kalabhavana her services to the

institution were invaluable. Santiniketan afforded a scope to her native talents which she turned to good account by helping to make decorative art and handicrafts serious subjects of study. People know her as a painter of originality. Her paintings, at their best, will assuredly remain some of the best examples of decorative painting done in Bengal in recent years. But our concern is not so much for Sukumari Devi--the artist, as for our ever beloved *Mashima* whose death has meant for all of us a personal loss.

...

We regret the death of Sir Phirozshah Sethna whose name was long associated with our institution, as one of the trustees of the Zoroastrian Fund which maintains a chair in our research department.

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# VISVA-BHARATI NEWS

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Volume VII

NOVEMBER, 1938

Number V

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## Santiniketan & Sriniketan

The Asrama re-opened after the Pujah holidays on October 30.

Gurudeva spent practically the whole of the vacation at Santiniketan excepting a few days (October 8 to 11) when he went to Calcutta to have his eyes examined by a specialist. The doctor has asked him to cut down his work to the irreducible minimum and for some time to come, it will not at all be possible for him to attend to his correspondence. We are happy to say that on the whole he is keeping well these days.

...

The staff at Santiniketan will be considerably strengthened by two new appointments,—Balraj Sahni and Nirmal Kumar Chatterji who have joined from the commencement of the new session. Sjt. Sahni who comes from the Punjab is an M. A. in English of the Punjab University and Sjt. Chatterji, an ex-student of Santiniketan, is an M. A., B. T. of Calcutta. They will be teaching both in the College and the School departments. A new adhyapaka of Geography is also soon to be appointed.

...

The Sangit-Bhavana which is in a way, perhaps the most well-known department of the Visva-Bharati in the outer world and enjoys great reputation all over the country as an excellent school for music and dancing has no permanent building of its own, the classes being held in the Ex-Students' Bungalow which is extremely unsuitable and inadequate for the purpose. We are however happy that

arrangements have been made to construct a separate building for the department and the work will commence very soon.

...

The Havell Memorial Hall of the Kala-Bhavana Museum is nearing completion and the formal opening ceremony will be performed towards the middle of December. The work of the Hindi-Bhavana is also proceeding at a rapid pace and it is expected that the building will be ready for occupation from the beginning of the New Year.

...

We are very happy to welcome Sree-jukta Pratima Devi who has just returned home after a long holiday at Kalimpong where she had been advised to go for reasons of health. There seems to be a decided improvement and we hope she is sufficiently restored to health to be able to bear comfortably the strain of her numerous official and social duties. Unfortunately the absence of her two principal colleagues in the Sree-Bhavana (Girls' Hostel) during this term will add to her burden considerably. Mlle. Bossenec has just undergone a very serious operation in a Calcutta Nursing Home and even though she is improving rapidly it will not be possible for her to join work very soon. Mrs. Komalam Craig has gone to Australia for a short holiday. Temporary arrangements however have been made in the Sree-Bhavana to carry on their duties.

...

(Continued on page 89)

## A Poem

Early winter spreads her filmy veil  
over midnight stars,  
and the call comes from the deep,  
“Man, bring out your lamp.”

The forests are bare of flowers,  
the birds have ceased to sing,  
the riverside grass has shed its blossoms.

Come, Dipali, waken hidden flames  
out of the desolate dark,  
and offer symphony of praise to eternal light.

The stars are dimmed,  
the night is disconsolate,  
and the call comes from the deep,  
“Man, bring out your lamp.”

*Rabindranath Tagore*

## Basic National Education

Asha Devi

(The Hindustani Talimi Sangh)

A scheme of free and compulsory education for all children of India between the ages of seven and fourteen has been before the country now for a little over a year. In the language of popular journalism this scheme is known as the Wardha Scheme of Education. Those connected with the practical working out of the scheme describe it as a scheme of basic national education. In the words of Gandhiji, the originator of the scheme, "a more correct though less picturesque designation would be Rural National Education through Village Handicrafts."

This scheme, first outlined in the pages of the "Harijan," then discussed and defined in the Wardha Educational Conference of October 1937, has been accepted by the Haripura session of the Indian National Congress as the congress policy of national education. It is being now translated into practice as an experimental measure in the three congress provinces of C. P., Bihar and Orissa, and in a few private institutions under the guidance of the Hindustani Talimi Sangh. It seems rather late in the day to speak of the underlying principles of this scheme of education, yet the fundamentals of this scheme, though essentially simple, are not yet clear before the country, and it would be worth while, especially for the students who will be teachers tomorrow, to try and understand the full implications of this scheme which attempts to solve one of the most pressing problems of national reconstruction today—the problem of national education.

To understand the full implication of the scheme we shall take the definition as furnished by the originator himself. He describes it as "a scheme of rural national education through village handicrafts."

Thus we see that the first objective of the scheme is that it must be rural—that is—primarily it must be a scheme of education designed to fulfil the needs, both cultural and economic, of our village children.

This condition of a scheme of national education for India being primarily rural is a fundamental one—not only for the obvious reason that India is a country of villages, and the problem of our national education is the education of these village children, but for the far deeper reason that our civilisation, unlike that of the West, is essentially rural.

The word rural here does not merely mean the opposite of urban. It stands for a particular type of culture and a standard of values. It is essential for the life of a nation that its system of education should be a natural expression of its own peculiar national genius and civilisation. Only under such a system of education can the children of a nation grow to their fullest and most natural development, carry on the stream of the nation's cultural and economic life, and make their own contribution to it. A scheme of national education for the children of India therefore must first fulfil this inner, spiritual necessity of being "rural"—in the positive sense of the term.

Besides fulfilling this inner spiritual necessity of being a true child of our culture, a scheme of national education must also conform in its outward form and content to the village economy before it can be considered "rural." Its curriculum and programme of work must be vitally related to the social, economic and cultural life of the village, and all its external accessories such as building and equipment must be of the simplest and in keeping with the villagers' standard of living.

When a scheme of education has fulfilled these conditions, it can claim to be considered as a scheme of rural national education for the children of India. For any programme of national reconstruction in India these two objectives are practically synonymous.

How then does the scheme under consideration attempt to fulfil this fundamental condition? How does it plan to achieve this great revolution in the education of our village children, and thus in the whole life of the nation? The answer is "by educating our village children in their villages so as to draw out all their faculties through some selected village handicrafts, in an atmosphere free from super-imposed restrictions and interference."

"I hold that the highest development of the body, mind and soul is possible under such a system of education. Every handicraft has to be taught not merely mechanically as is done today—but scientifically, i. e., the child should know the why and wherefore of every process."

This suggestion is not so revolutionary in the field of education as it might appear at first sight. Latest educational research

has recognised the fundamental principle that the most natural and effective educational process for an all-round development of a growing child is through some form of "productive work" or "creative activity." The "project method," "activity curriculum" or "labour schools" are all experiments in this direction.

Candhiji, who had always experimented with the educative value of manual work has aimed at the same result, not through formal educational research, but through his intuitive perception of the needs of the Indian villages and villagers. He has carried the truth to its logical conclusion and holds that a scientific and co-operative training in some selected rural handicraft in a rural environment is not only the effective means but also an integral part of the education of village children of India.

He goes one step further. He believes that this scheme can be accepted as a scheme of rural national education—because if carried out in the right spirit, it will through the very process of education help to bear its own financial burden. In fact, the realisation of its own financial implication he holds to be an essential part of the educational process itself.

"Given the right kind of teachers, our children will be taught the dignity of labour and learn to regard it as an integral part and a means of their intellectual growth and to realise that it is patriotic to pay for their training through their labour."

The problem of national education for all children of India had been considered impracticable so far. For the first time we have before us a scheme of education which is not only sound educationally,

but which will also be the most economical.

Education, having in the past been a monopoly of the privileged few and not a birthright of all, has disdained to consider its financial implications. But once we free our minds from these inherited prejudices and think of education in terms of a nation-wide scale, we shall realise that a realisation and partial shouldering of its own economic burden has its own educative value in the training of the future citizens of a nation.

These are the main objectives of this scheme of basic national education for the children of India. Like every great edu-

cational endeavour, it is based on an underlying social and moral philosophy, and carries with it the seeds of a great social and cultural revolution. It envisages a classless society of workers whose future citizens from their earliest childhood will be trained in habits of co-operative productive work, and in the co-ordination of their hands and their mind. This great revolution will be brought about neither by propaganda nor by class-war, but peacefully and unconsciously in the corporate productive activity of teachers and students in the future village schools of India.

### A Letter to Czecho-Slovakia

"Uttarayan"  
Santiniketan, Bengal.  
October, 15, 1938.

Dear Friend,

I feel so keenly about the suffering of your people as if I was one of them. For what has happened in your country is not a mere local misfortune which may at the best claim our sympathy, it is a tragic revelation that the destiny of all those principles of humanity for which the peoples of the West turned martyrs for three centuries rests in the hands of cowardly guardians who are selling it to save their own skins. It turns one cynical to see the democratic peoples betraying their kind when even the bullies stand by each other.

I feel so humiliated and so helpless when I contemplate all this, humiliated to see all the values, which have given whatever worth modern civilization has, betrayed one by one, and helpless that we are powerless to prevent it. Our country is itself a victim of these wrongs.

My words have no power to stay the onslaught of the maniacs, nor even the power to arrest the desertion of those who erstwhile pretended to be the saviours of humanity. I can only remind those who are not yet wholly demented that when men turn beasts they sooner or later tear each other.

As for your own country, I can only hope that though abandoned and robbed, it will maintain its native integrity and falling back upon its own inalienable resources will recreate a richer national life than before.

I am sending you a copy of my English rendering of a recent poem of mine,\* yet unpublished, in which my outraged sentiment has found its expression. You may use it as you like, though it will also be published in the November issue of the Visvabharati Quarterly. If you like I can also send you the Bengali original.

With best wishes and regards,

Yours sincerely,  
(sd.) Rabindranath Tagore

\* The Poem is published in the November issue of the Visva-Bharati Quarterly.

(Continued from page 34.)

✓ Under the auspices of the Bengal Provincial Scouts' Head-quarters, a Scoutmasters' Training Camp was organised at Sriniketan during the vacation. Altogether twenty-four members, majority of whom were recruited from the local Shiksha-Charcha Bhavana, received a ten days' course of instruction. Mr. Boren Bose (assisted by Messrs. S. Ghosh, R. Ghosh and Monoj Khan) was in charge of the Camp. On October 30, before the final break-up of the Camp, there was an interesting demonstration of mass-drill, games etc. which was attended by a large gathering of spectators. Gurudeva who graced the occasion by his presence delivered a short speech, an English summary of which is given below:—

"I have been asked to address a few words and would like to begin by saying how much I am impressed by your display. What has impressed me in this display is the expression of your spirit of youth. I wonder if you realize how precious this gift is. If you do, then it is your primary responsibility to cherish it to the end of your lives. For you need never grow old—even like these trees which, because they are firmly rooted in their soil, renew their youth every year. Like them if you are established in a deep and profound relationship with the soil of humanity, the sap of youth shall never fail you.

"I want you to love this earth and all that is on it, not ignoring the least little thing and make your love perfect with understanding. Then your life will naturally flower in joy and the earth will be richer with the fruit of your service. You have to be constantly on your guard against the danger of sinking into your narrow individual selves and parting with love and joy to purchase success.

"I have been able to preserve my spirit of youth, despite the misleading exterior of my grey hair, simply because I have never ceased to love this earth and this life. It is a gift so great and so within the reach of us all that I cannot wish you better. If only our countrymen were aware of its value, they would not thus languish in the sordid atmosphere of innumerable isolations."

#### **Important Notice**

The whole correspondence between Gurudeva and Poet Noguchi on the Sino-Japanese conflict is being published in the November issue of the Visva-Bharati Quarterly which will be ready in the third week of the month. A limited number of this correspondence will be available in pamphlet form at the price of annas four. No extra postage will be charged. Orders should be booked immediately with the Manager, Visva-Bharati Quarterly, Santiniketan.

#### **A Correction**

Rai Bahadur Sukumar Chatterjee who has recently joined Sriniketan served as Inspector General of Registration in Bengal and not as Registrar of Co-operative Societies.

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# VISVA-BHARATI NEWS

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Volume VII

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Number VI

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## A Poem

My unquiet spirit  
    yearns for the unexplored.  
The bird of the alien nest  
    goes crossing the hazy horizon  
and my thoughts are driven by the troubled wind  
    rushing from the far-away sea;  
my dream spreads its wings  
    while I remain chained in a golden cage.

*Rabindranath Tagore*

---

\* Translated by Rabindranath Tagore himself from his song আমার মন কেমন করে

## Santiniketan and Sriniketan.

✓ Rabindranath was expected to deliver the J. C. Bose Memorial lecture at the Bose Institute in Calcutta on Nov. 30th, but could not go owing to reasons of health. His address was read at the meeting and has since been published in the November issue of the Visva-Bharati Quarterly.

...

Amita Sen M. A. (Cal.) has been appointed Adhyapika in the Sangit-Bhavana with effect from Nov. 15th. She had been a student both in the Patha-Bhavana and the Siksha-Bhavana where she left behind a brilliant academic record. She has specialised in the songs of Rabindranath and her joining the Sangit-Bhavana augurs well for that department.

...

Anil Kumar Chanda has been appointed Adhyaksha of the Siksha-Bhavana from Nov. 15th ; Pramada Ranjan Ghose continues to act as the Adhyaksha of the Patha-Bhavana. With the increasing work of the departments, it has been found almost impossible for the same man to run both the departments together and we are going back to the old practice when the School and the College were run as two separate units.

...

✓ On Nov. 12th we had the pleasure of a visit from Dr. Meghnad Saha who, in the words of Gurudeva, needs no introduction and whose reputation has crossed the boundaries of our native soil and who is recognised as one of the foremost scientists of today.

He delivered a speech on Nov. 13th on "A New Philosophy of Life" at the Sinha-Sadan which was widely attended. Rabindranath was present at the meeting and at the end of Dr. Saha's speech spoke a few words expressing his own ideas on the subject. An authorised version of Dr. Saha's speech appears elsewhere in this issue of the News.

...

✓ Santiniketan and Sriniketan observed a holiday on Nov. 18th in honour of the death of Kemal Ataturk. In the afternoon, the inmates of the Asrama gathered in front of Gurudeva's cottage when he gave an inspiring address on the life and achievements of the departed leader. An abridged and authorised English translation of the speech is given below.

"There was a time when Asia prided herself on her ancient civilisation and looked to a golden past to forget the humiliations of an inglorious present. Then, before our very eyes, came the period of darkness and despair when Asia played the sedulous ape to Europe and thus stamped the seal of inferiority on herself. It was a miracle how like a sudden outburst, renaissance came and Asia began to reassert herself. In the Far East Japan adapted her resources to the requirements of a new age, and, in so doing, consolidated her position and prestige amongst the greatest of the world. It is sad to think that her insolence is steadily paving the path to her own

.  
(Continued on page 46)

## Rathindranath Tagore

By Kalimohan Ghose

On the occasion of the fiftieth birth-anniversary of Rathindranath Tagore, we, his colleagues, friends and the students of Santiniketan and Sriniketan, have assembled here this day to offer him our tribute of affection and admiration. When our revered Gurudeva founded Santiniketan to set before his countrymen new ideals of education, Rathindranath was his first pupil and the seeds that were sown by Gurudeva in those days have now blossomed forth in Rathindranath's life. Those noble ideals have inspired him all along his life in all his activities and our great institution is the final culmination of these. Santiniketan is the embodiment of Gurudeva's deep regard for Indian culture while his profound sympathy for the starving millions of our country who have never known the joy of having a full meal, has found expression in Sriniketan. After establishing Santiniketan, Gurudeva undertook the work of village-reconstruction at Selaidah and sent his son to U.S.A to give him a thorough training in agriculture so that with his help he might give concrete shape to his dreams. Rathindranath passed the highest examination of the University of Illinois with great distinction, and after his return to India he founded a model agricultural farm to set forth before the tenants at Selaidah improved methods of agriculture. In the meantime, with the advance of years, Santiniketan grew up to be a great institution and Gurudeva sought Rathindranath's co-operation in its

management. But of hesitation, Rathindranath did not come forward at first, but a few days after he expressed before Gurudeva his desire to dedicate his life in the service of this institution. The memory of that day remains still vivid in my mind when Gurudeva told us with a joyous smile on his face, "I feel happy that Rathi has agreed of his own accord to devote his energies to the cause of this institution; I never desired to put any pressure on him but that he has come forward with this noble resolve makes me so glad."

Rathindranath is a silent worker. The strenuous and selfless efforts that he has been making outside the glaring gaze of the public to give concrete shape to the ideals of Visva-Bharati is well-known to his colleagues. When Santiniketan developed into Visva-Bharati, Rathindranath had to labour eighteen hours a day for the diverse activities of this great institution varying from the work of putting it on a sound financial basis to the building up of its different departments from beginning to end. As a result of this severe strain his health suffered a breakdown. Even when suffering the acutest pain he would, when we visited him, not talk to us of his troubles but enquire about the various pressing problems of Visva-Bharati.

Visva-Bharati is the most cherished object of his life and by dedicating himself completely to its service he has won the affection and esteem of his colleagues.

I would narrate here one incident which helps us to realise some special

traits in his character. The great political leader, Deshabandhu Chittaranjan, came to see Gurudeva and expressed his earnest desire to send Rathindranath to the Indian Legislative Assembly and he made arrangements that he might be returned uncontested from the Rajsahi Division. Gurudeva consented but Rathindranath refused to go to the Assembly. I was in Calcutta that time and I pressed him not to reject the offer. Rathindranath said to me with firmness, "I have devoted all my time and energies to the work of Visva-Bharati and I cannot spare my time for any other work. So I do not want to go to the Assembly simply for the sake of the honour that it would bring to me."

He has tried his best to free Gurudeva from the anxieties of running this great institution. Gurudeva's noble ideals have actuated him in every work of his life. We all know how much help Gurudeva has received in building up Visva-Bharati from Rathindranath's whole-hearted devotion to its work. So we have chosen him to be our leader. We offer to him on his fiftieth birthday our sincerest love and respect. We pray to God that he may be granted a long life and his efforts to realise in life the ideals of his illustrious father may be crowned with success.\*

\* English translation ( by Santosh Kumar Pratihar ) of a speech delivered by Kalimohan Ghose on the fiftieth birth anniversary of Rathindranath Tagore at Sri-niketan on 27. 11. 88.

## A New Philosophy of Life\*

By Meghnad Saha D. Sc., F. R. S.

The Poet has given you in beautiful language his "Philosophy of Life". If you look to the springs of any civilization you will find that their whole outlook and action are determined by the philosophies of higher life which they follow. Most of the ancient philosophies or religions had one of their cardinal beliefs that the world was brought into existence by a Creator. But the attributes of the Creator are not the same in all ancient systems. In the Jewish scriptures, God is a great exponent of law and order. He expects everybody to conform to the Ten Commandments, and threatens those who transgress these with dire consequences.

The Creator of the other nations

whose scriptures were based upon Jewish scriptures has some other features added. The people who followed these philosophies were mostly guided by codified law and by the interpreters and upholders of law from the highest sections of society, and there was a certain amount of intolerance towards other faiths.

But coming to the far East, we find that the Chinese Creator was a mechanic who shaped the world with his hammer, axe, and forge. So the Chinese became great mechanics, engineers, and the artisan had a place in society which is much superior than in other nations.

The Hindu Creator, on the other hand, is a philosopher who fashions every-

\* Authorised Report of a speech delivered on Nov. 13th at the Sinhasadan.

thing,—the phenomenal world, the living beings, the scriptures, out of his meditations. So in the Hindu society great social prestige is attached to the mystic and professors of idle speculative philosophy. The mechanic and the engineer belong to a lower stratum and there is complete divorce between the brain and the hand. The consequence has been that Indians have been following the same technic, in arts and crafts, for ages together, and have allowed themselves to be dominated by nations possessing superior technique and organisation.

Every philosophy has got its shortcomings and at present all of these have become antiquated because the background of world picture on which they were based has been found to be wrong. The ancients thought that the earth was the centre of the Universe, the stars were the souls of pious men, and the sun, moon and planets were gods who controlled the destinies of men according to their work. They thought that there was an ideal age when men lived in perfect happiness, obeyed the laws of God, and consequently did not suffer from famine, pestilence or other calamities. We know that all this background of a world picture is wrong. The earth, far from being the most important body in the universe, is a tiny one formed as a result of an accident to the parent body, the sun. Man evolved from lower forms of life, and civilised life is the result of long millennia of discoveries in arts and crafts, their application to human needs, consequent re-adjustments of society, and the transmission of accumulated experience of the past to the future generations. In fact "Man has to make himself by constant work, in which

the brain and the hand should play equal partnership, and Mother Earth has to be exploited for all her resources in power, minerals and agriculture." Our fight for existence has not come to an end, but it has only started.

One method of solving our problems which is often advocated is to go back to the villages, to improve handicrafts and take to the spinning wheel. But careful considerations will show this cannot solve our problem. A scientist by nature I am always accustomed to think in terms of figures. If we compare the work done by the people of Europe and America with that done in this country, we find that the Westerner works twenty times more than the Indian. It is because they have harnessed the forces of nature. Modern civilisation rests on power development and its utilization for industries but unfortunately in India harnessing of the forces of nature has not been carried out to a satisfactory level. Only 2% of the total resources of the country has been utilised.

I have no glamour for villages and do not think they are ideal places for living. People going back to villages for making a living will only increase the problems of the villages. The villagers will not like us to compete with them. They want more leisure and more comforts in life, better homes, better price for their products.

These problems and those of unemployment can be solved only by creation of fresh work. Increase in work will not only solve the problems of poverty, but also the problems of defence. If we want to avoid foreign aggression and the imminent danger that is threatening us

from both the East and the West, we have got to organise our industries to the high level of Europe and America.

There are many so-called well-wishers who maintain that India must remain an agricultural country but no doctrine can be more pernicious than this. Ruralisation will only lead to a continuous exploitation of the poor by a few capitalists. In the West, all the key industries are in the hands of the State and all profit motives are subordinated to State control. The same course must be adopted in this country and as Sun Yat Sen preached for China, I maintain that state-controlled

capital with large measures of a social programme gives us a satisfactory way of solving the problems of regeneration of our industries to the level of Europe and America.

But I want that our philosophy should not be of the Russian brand. If any philosophy is to bear fruit it should not only be based on mere materialism. There is something missing in the life of Russia and that is freedom of ideas and action. If we have to renew our springs of civilisation we should have a certain background of moral and social benevolence. Without these there can be no stability.

(Continued from page 42)

ruin and we can no longer look up to her as the retriever of Asia's prestige. At a time when we had fastened our attention upon renascent Turkey, came the sad news of Kemal's death. Turkey was once called "The Sick Man of Europe" until Kemal came and set before us an example of a new Asia whose living present recalled the glories of a dead past. This example has given us hope of a new life in the Orient, and from this point of view, Kemal's spirit is worthy of our respectful admiration. His death is as great a loss for the whole of Asia as for Turkey herself. Kemal Pasha's heroism was not on the battlefield only; he waged a relentless war against the tyranny of blind superstition which perhaps is the deadliest enemy a people have to contend against. To his own people he was a great deliverer; to us he should remain a great example; for standing on the quicksand of piety which is no better than prejudice, we are drifting towards a national disintegration.

To my Hindu countrymen I can say with confidence: 'Your society is groaning under the weight of meaningless observances. If you cannot sacrifice prejudice and meet the challenge of a new age, then indeed you are doomed.'

To my Muslim countrymen, who resent any criticism, I can only point to the examples of Turkey and Persia."

Under the auspices of the Rural Reconstruction Department, a training camp for village workers was opened at Sriniketan on Nov. 15th which will last for four weeks. A number of young enthusiasts have come from practically all parts of India and even from Ceylon. A comprehensive course of studies has been devised for the Camp.

We are very glad to announce that from the first week of December we are going to have an emporium of our own in Calcutta for the sale and display of the products of the Silpa-Bhavana (Industries Department) at Sriniketan. The shop is located at 210 Cornwallis Street and will be run conjointly with the Visva-Bharati Book-Shop. An exhibition has also been arranged in this connection which will be formally opened on Dec. 8 by Rashtrapati Subhas Chandra Bose who is specially returning from his Punjab and Sindh tour for this purpose.

Our Vice-President Mr. C. C. Dutt arrived in Santiniketan on 30th November and is expected to stay on till the 10th of this month. Although, owing to the state of his health, his visits are unfortunately always short, he makes his presence so freely available to all of us in the asrama that the pleasant memories he leaves behind remain long with us. His charming democratic personality which makes every one, old and young, feel at home in his presence and the practical wisdom of his versatile gifts have been of immense value to the social atmosphere of the asrama. We are particularly reminded of his invaluable qualities, as his term of office as Vice-President of Visva-Bharati expires on the 31st December and the state of his health does not permit him to undertake the responsibility for another term. His retirement would leave a void which it would be difficult to fill. We are, however, very happy and very grateful to him for assuring us that he will continue his full co-operation and association with Visva-Bharati in his capacity as member of the Samsad and as a Pradhana. We may therefore look forward to his visits in the future as before.

...

On the 27th of November, the workers and inmates of Santiniketan and Sriniketan gathered at the Amra-Kunja at Sriniketan in the morning to meet Rathindranath Tagore, our General-Secretary, on the happy occasion of his fiftieth birth-anniversary. It will not be out of place to mention here that Rathindranath is one of the first batch of five students with whom our Founder-President started his school towards the beginning of this century.

The programme of the day included a short ceremony in the forenoon when he was garlanded and anointed by Pandit Haricharan Bandopadhyaya on behalf of the assembled people; this was followed by a gay and sumptuous alfresco meal on the bank of the tank at Sriniketan. A very happy day concluded with the performance of Gurudeva's "Tasher Desh" at Santiniketan.

A well-wisher of the Visva-Bharati and a close friend of Rathindranath's has placed at the hands of our authorities a sum of money out of which a scholarship will be awarded to a deserving student in the Patha-Bhavana in commemoration of the event.

We wish Rathindranath a happy, long and prosperous life.

### Alumni News

We are deeply grieved to learn of the sad and untimely death of Pareshnath Bisi who was a student of the Patha-Bhavana for a number of years. We offer our heart-felt condolence to the members of his family, particularly to his brothers, Pramathanath and Prafullanath.

...

We offer our hearty congratulations to Monomohan Ghose (late of the Vidya-Bhavana) on his receiving the Doctorate of the Calcutta University and Himansulal Sarkar (late of the Patha-Bhavana) on his passing the M. Sc. examination of the same University in Zoology standing first in the Second Class. He is now carrying on research work in his subject at the University Laboratory.

...

His numerous friends will be delighted to know that Dr. Hashim Anir Ali (late of Sriniketan), has been appointed the Marketing Officer of the Agricultural Department of the Government of H. E. H. the Nizam.

# HINDI TRANSLATIONS OF Poet Rabindranath Tagore's Works.



The copyright of the Bengali works of Rabindranath Tagore and their translations in Hindi belongs to Visva-Bharati and the authorities of the Visva-Bharati have purchased the stock in hand of all Hindi translations of Rabindranath Tagore's works from the Prabasi Office which was authorised by the author to publish Hindi translations. The Hindi works are now being printed and published by the Publishing Department of the Visva-Bharati and will be available at the Visva-Bharati Book-Shop, 210, Cornwallis Street, Calcutta.

The Publishing Department of the Visva-Bharati has also arranged for publication of a series of authorised translations of the Poet's works in Hindi from original Bengali.

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# VISVA-BHARATI NEWS

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Volume VI

JANUARY, 1939

Number VII

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## A Poem

Break the bar, break it.  
Let the captive mind be freed,  
Let Life with its boisterous laughter  
    flood the dry river bed,  
    sweeping away the dead and the dying.  
We have heard the call of the New,  
We shall storm the castle of the Unknown.

*Rabindranath Tagore*

## Santiniketan and Sriniketan.

\* In the vacancy created by the retirement of Charu Chandra Datta, the Samsad (Governing Body) has unanimously elected C. F. Andrews as Upacharya (Vice-President) of the Visva-Bharati for a period of two years commencing from January 1, 1939. It may be noted here that Mr. Andrews had been our first Vice-President when the Visva-Bharati was formally inaugurated in 1921.

He returned to the Asrama from Madras on December 24 to take part in the anniversary celebrations and left the next day for Allahabad where he had to preside over the All-India Philosophical Congress. He is expected back in the first week of January.

...

\* We are extremely glad to have Leonard Elmhirst again with us for a short stay. He flew out from England and arrived in time to join the "7th of Pous" festival and the subsequent functions of the anniversary celebrations. He presided over the annual meeting of the Alumni Association on December 23 and delivered a most interesting speech recalling his memories of Santiniketan and Sriniketan. He is expected to stay here till the 8th of January when he would leave again for England.

...

\* On Thursday, the eighth of December, we had the opening ceremony of the Sriniketan Emporium in Calcutta under the presidency of Rashtrapati Subhas Chandra Bose. In the absence of Gurudev, his address was read at the meeting

by Rathindranath Tagore. Sjt. Bose in his speech described his attitude to the cottage industries and said that there was the need of both cottage industry and large-scale industry in the country. He denied that there could be any clash or inconsistency between the two forms of industries. Proceeding Sjt. Bose said that cottage industry not only helped the people to earn their livelihood but also helped them to develop their aesthetic sense. He further added that the Poet was right when he said that they had lost the joy of their mind which found expression in their listless movement and life-less behaviour. And Sjt. Bose said that if they took to cottage industry, it would help them to get back that joy.

The shop is located at No. 210 Cornwallis Street, Calcutta.

...

\* There was a pleasant ceremony in the Kala-Bhavana on Sunday, the 11th of December when the Havell Memorial Hall was declared open by Sjt. P. R. Das of Patna, an Ex-Judge of the Patna High Court and at one time a great patron of Indian Art. The Hall which is an annexe to the Museum of the Kala-Bhavana will house the collection of pictures, manuscripts etc. donated to the Visva-Bharati by Mrs. L. Havell, in memory of her husband whose name is written in indelible characters in the annals of our art history.

...

(Continued on Page 58)

## Our Work at Sriniketan

L. K. Elmhirst

It is now nearly 16 years ago that on February 5, 1922, fourteen of us, with our kit, set out in a Ford Lorry, driven by Alu, to Surul, to begin our experiment of rural reconstruction and took over the old engineer's house, the ruin of the old railway shed and the garden and farm, then given over to malaria, monkeys and mosquitoes. The Poet sent with me ten students who said they would like to try to be farmers and as staff, Santosh Majumdar and Kalimohan Ghose. It was some years later that the Santiniketan Staff told me of the difficulties they had with those same students until Surul took them off their hands.

From the outset we had two main objectives, to survey the economic, social and scientific needs of the cultivator in his home, village and fields and secondly to try out our own laboratory experiments in health, education, craft, cultivation and animal husbandry. "Sir" I can remember the students saying that first night, "we have dug the trenches and arranged the latrine buckets for the morning, but where is our sweeper?" Together in the morning we emptied the buckets and were encouraged to learn that the Poet had the same day shared the same office with us in his own garden. Always he was at hand to discuss new problems as they arose, to give a lead. At his suggestion the girls in the school were to be given a chance to work their own gardens. Objections were raised by the staff. I can still see Gurudev armed with an axe and the girls with

spades clearing the jungle for the first plot.

For 16 years now we have carried on this research and experiment into the social, educational, economic and scientific problems of village life and though the work has grown beyond my recognition the old principles we learnt from the Poet remain the same and, as I believe, would apply not only to the whole of rural India but to most of the rest of the world as well.

When the Poet took Dr. Kalidas Nag, Nandalal Bose, Kshitimohan Sen and myself to China, we had occasion to visit the Soviet Ambassador in Peking. The Poet tried to explain the principles of this village work, and how after trying them out intensively in a few villages he hoped the people of India would see the need to apply them on a much wider basis. The Ambassador then explained to us that one of the benefits of the Revolution in Russia was the fact that overnight it had been possible to spread certain blessings from one end of Russia to the other. Some years later another Soviet Ambassador, discussing the rural problem of the U. S. S. R. told me that one of the great drawbacks of a revolution was that so many reforms were put over in such a hurry without sufficient thought that much of the work had to be done all over again with considerable waste and delay as a result. "How fortunate you are", he said, "to be able to try out your experiments on a small scale and slowly to discover

the right principles before attempting application on a wide scale."

It is some of these same principles that we learnt from the Poet that we have been trying out in Devonshire at Dartington Hall since 1925. I do not want to attempt to describe that experiment but rather to finish by trying to restate after some years of trial and error a few of those basic principles that we learnt from the Poet and by practice at Sriniketan.

There were plenty of people in those days who laughed at us as merely "chashas", as pursuers of an expensive hobby which would not last, or who accused us of taking up another Poet's toy. The crazy toys of poets so often seem to have a significance which we fail to recognise until it is too late.

First and foremost was the Poet's emphasis upon the need for a fundamental respect for and readiness to appreciate the individual, whether aborigine Santhal, outcast Muchi, man, woman, boy or girl. This may sound like a platitude but, there were in those days any number of bhadralogs and British Government officials who could, from their first approach, be guaranteed to upset and insult any villager they came across, and in looking for staff for the village reconstruction work we found but a bare handful of workers who could be counted upon to give the villager the feeling that he was going to be not merely respected but appreciated as an individual and as a person with an experience of life of value for its own sake.

This principle of respect for the individual and of refusal to impose upon him some system we may think good for him seems to me basic in the whole approach of Santiniketan and Sriniketan

to education, to extension work, and to life.

As each sunrise and sunset gives us some new scenic effect at the opening and close of the day, so a Poet's mind, filled with creative imagination and longsighted vision seems to regard each day as a challenge to us to engage in some new experiment with life. It is as if he was forever asking us the question, what is life for if not for experiment and new creation? In sending this lorry load of amateurs to Surul the Poet was not only applying this principle of experiment, but was taking, I am still inclined to think, a much bigger gamble than usual. I doubt whether he will ever learn the prosaic caution of the everyday world. I hope not.

The third principle is only perhaps a natural outcome of the first two. If life is to be treated as a creative experiment and if every individual is to be respected, then there is no process in life that must not come up for imaginative treatment, for scientific check and measurement or for periodical spring cleaning by somebody, preferably a poet.

Into our wholly compartmentalised world, docketed, labelled and pigeon-holed, the Poet cast his synthetic ideas of Visva-Bharati and Sriniketan and claimed them as natural and logical additions to his existing school. Who ever heard of the older universities of Europe actually going into the business world and operating commercial enterprises as part of their daily function? Masters of Arts the West and the East turn out in thousands, but of what kind of Arts, and how many of them have really mastered the training of feeling and the development of the imagination and of the senses through actual experi-

ence of drama, music, dance and design, as the science laboratory disciplines and trains the reason and the intellect. How were life or education to be or to become whole without access to as wide a pattern and field of experience in the Arts as possible, experience not just of a bookish and intellectual kind of lectures, but of a rich cultivation of all the senses and of the inner centres of consciousness.

The word capitalist still denotes to us the idea of exploitation of human beings and of unlimited profit-taking at the expense of the employee and the public. The poet never hesitates in advising us to launch some new business enterprise if he thought there was a good enough human, social and economic reason for it. How else he would say was the world of commerce to be civilised than by bringing intelligent and sensitive minds to work upon it and in it?

In the building of the Sriniketan industries the disciplines of trade and economics have worked as a very proper check upon the overflowing idealism of our early days. Vague goodwill, sentiment and

enthusiasm are fairly cheap and plentiful commodities on the market and if money is available they get free play for a time but so often they land us only in discouragement and waste. When success in their application has to be measured in terms of human betterment of the raising of the standard of living of a poverty-stricken people, of economic, social, artistic and psychological progress, the wastage today of much well intentioned but ill directed human effort in the social and political fields becomes only too apparent.

To respect the individual, to treat each day as a new opportunity for some creative experiment, to look upon the whole of life and all its processes as the natural play-ground for human art and scientific measurement this habits of minds I learnt to appreciate from our Founder-President, and, fail as one is bound to do, lacking that strength and poise that seem to come to him from his inner certainty of vision and of the meaning to life, I can never be too grateful for the opportunity he gave me to draw upon his inspiration during those four years at Sriniketan.

(Continued from Page 50)

Her Excellency the Marchioness of Linlithgow accompanied by her daughter the Lady Anne Hope and personal staff paid a visit to Santiniketan and Sriniketan on December 19. She arrived in the morning by a special train and after spending a few hours in visiting all the important departments left in the same afternoon.

...

The following members have been elected to the Samsad for the years 1939-41 :—

#### A. From the General Constituency—

1. Rai Bahadur Sukumar Chatterji, M.A.
2. Humayun Kabir, M.A. (Oxon), M.L.C.
3. Dharendramohan Sen, M. A., Ph. D.  
(London)
4. Charuchandra Bhattacharya, M. Sc
5. Hirankumar Sanyal, M. A.

#### B. From the Santiniketan Samiti—

1. Anil Kumar Chanda, B. Sc. (London)
2. Sailesh Chandra Chakravarty, M.Sc.,  
B. L.

#### C. From the Sriniketan Samiti—

1. Gourgopal Ghose, B. Sc.

D. From the Asramika-Sangha (for  
1939-40)

1. Nepal Chandra Ray, B. L.

...

This year as usual all the educational departments at Santiniketan organised excursions for the students which proved to be of great success. The Kala-Bhavana party went to Monghyr in Behar, the Siksha-Bhavana to Bhuvaneswar in Orissa and the Patha-Bhavana to Nalanda and Rajgir (in Behar). The parties were under the guidance of their respective adhyakshas.

...

Sriniketan is embarking on a bold venture to publish a fortnightly news-sheet in Bengali for circulation among the villages where we have our centres of rural reconstruction work. The paper which is to be named "Deshe O Bideshe" will have its first issue published towards the end of January.

...

We quote the following from the Times, London, December 10, 1938—

"Lord Zetland, Secretary of State for India, opened an exhibition of Sir Rabindranath Tagore's drawings yesterday afternoon at the Calmann Gallery, St. Jame's Place. The exhibition, which is arranged by the India Society, will remain open until January 5.

Lord Zetland said that the pictures came from the brush of a very gifted member of a very distinguished family which had played an outstanding part for a hundred years or more in the cultural movements of which India had been the

scene, and—might they say?—Bengal the centre. Sir Rabindranath Tagore had taken a leading part in the movement away from excessive devotion towards Western cultural standards and in the direction of a truer appreciation of the literature and art of his own country. His desire to give to his own people education of a kind congenial to the spirit of his own country had led to his founding the Santiniketan *ashram*, which had grown into a flourishing university, in which scholars of all countries were welcomed as guests.

It surely must be almost unique that a man who throughout his life had given expression to his emotional urges by means of literature, and particularly poetry, should have turned in the evening of his days to another medium of expression—namely, the artistic brush. It was said that he first thought of painting when, on one occasion, he made a blot on one of his literary manuscripts. Desiring, as he put it himself, to give the blot a decent burial, he converted it with his pen into a picture. The development which had since taken place had been truly remarkable, as shown by the exhibition. One of the characteristics of the pictures seemed to be their extraordinary variety. The different styles around the walls gave some indication of the versatility of the poet and artist himself. Lord Zetland added that his hearers must share his own gratitude to those who had given the members of the India Society the opportunity of going there, in the comparative peace and quiet of a private view, to see this really remarkable collection of pictures."

...

The anniversary of the foundation-day of Santiniketan was celebrated on December, 23, 1938. The programme began with Divine Service conducted by Gurudeva in the morning, in the Temple, which was packed to its utmost capacity with the inmates of Ashrama, the ex-students and a large number of visitors. The service consisted of songs and sermon. In the course of his address Gurudeva referred very feelingly to the Maharshi's search and sacrifice for Truth and also dwelt at length on the value of his life to us all in the modern age. The congregation dispersed after their pilgrimage to the meditation-seat of the Maharshi. In the evening there were entertainments of various kinds, such as a poetical symposium of village poets, Santhal dance, cinema show, etc. On 24th December the annual convocation of the Visva-Bharati was held. In his speech Gurudeva alluded to the ideal that inspired him to found the institution and direct its present activities. After he left,—and this he had to do early in order to avoid undue strain on his health—the business section of the Convocation was presided over by Sjt. Ramananda Chatterjee, when the annual report about the work of the different departments of the Visva-Bharati and the accounts were submitted and confirmed. In the afternoon there was the annual meeting of the ex-students' Association. The evening was crowded with a programme of entertainments like displays of fireworks, sports, etc.

On December 25, C. F. Andrews, who had arrived overnight just for a day

on his way to Allahabad to preside over the All-India Philosophical Congress there, conducted Christmas service in the Temple. This was followed by a meeting in grateful remembrance of those workers and students who had passed away from this world.

### Alumni News

The annual General Meeting of the Asramika Sangha took place in Amrakunja, Santiniketan on December 23 & 24 under the presidency of Leonard K. Elmhirst.

The following were elected office-bearers of the Sangha for the year 1939-40:—

Prafulla Chandra Sen—Vice President

Nirmal Chandra Chatterjee—

General Secretary

Anupananda Bhattacharya—

Asst. General Secretary

Saroj Ranjan Chowdhury—Member

without portfolio

Sujit Kumar Mukherjee— “,

Ajit Kumar Roy—Representative of the  
Calcutta Branch of the  
Sangha.

Santidev Ghosh was co-opted as a member of the Executive Committee of the Sangha.

Nepal Chandra Roy was elected representative of the Sangha to the Samsad.

The members met Rabindranath Tagore in an afternoon party which was largely attended on December 25 to congratulate him on his completing his 50th year.

# HINDI TRANSLATIONS OF Poet Rabindranath Tagore's Works.



The copyright of the Bengali works of Rabindranath Tagore and their translations in Hindi belongs to Visva-Bharati and the authorities of the Visva-Bharati have purchased the stock in hand of all Hindi translations of Rabindranath Tagore's works from the Prabasi Office which was authorised by the author to publish Hindi translations. The Hindi works are now being printed and published by the Publishing Department of the Visva-Bharati and will be available at the Visva-Bharati Book-Shop, 210, Cornwallis Street, Calcutta.

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# VISVA-BHARATI NEWS

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Volume VII

FEBRUARY, 1939

Number VIII

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By Jadupati Bose.

## Santiniketan and Sriniketan

C. F. Andrews, our Upacharya, after his visit to Orissa returned to the Asrama on Jan. 13, where he has been staying since then, relieving Gurudeva considerably of his official work. We expect him to be with us till the end of this session.

...

Our Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Jitendra-nath Chakravarty, has gone to Europe on a year's study leave to visit the various centres of Rural Health Work in England and on the Continent. During his absence Dr. Pratap C. Bhattacharya will be carrying on his work at Sriniketan.

...

Dr. Sudhir Sen B. Sc. (Econ.) London, Ph. D. (Bonn and London), who has been awarded a Darlington Trust Research Fellowship, has chosen Sriniketan as his centre of work and has already joined. After a brilliant academic career in Calcutta, he went to the London School of Economics where also he left behind an equally brilliant record. Later on he took his Doctorate from the Bonn and London Universities. Dr. Sen will be assisting in our work of rural reconstruction as an Economic Adviser.

...

The Pratisthata-Acharya (Founder-President) has nominated the following to the Samsad for the year 1939-40;

- (I) Charu Chandra Dutt,  
Some-time Upacharya,
- (II) Sitaram Sakseria,
- and (III) Prafulla Chandra Sen-Gupta.

The Samsad at its first meeting of this

year co-opted the following as members for the year 1939-40;

- (I) Bhagirath Kanodia,
- (II) R. Ahmed,
- and (III) Sudhir Kumar Lahiri.

...

The winter months, as with the rest of India, are our busy Tourist Season when we have always with us innumerable visitors and sightseers. But all our previous records in this direction have been broken this year. Hardly had the New Year set in, when we were privileged to welcome His Highness the Maharaja of Tipperah, who came and spent two days at Santiniketan (Jan. 7 and 8). The association between the Tipperah Raj and Santiniketan has been long and intimate. When Santiniketan was founded as a small residential school, the first financial help from outside came from the Tipperah State and ever since then, we have been the recipient of an annual grant from the Durbar. Gurudeva, in his welcome address to the Maharaja Bahadur, expressed in eloquent terms his own grateful thanks and that of the Visva-Bharati for all the assistance we have received from the State. In the evening of the seventh, the Dance-drama Chandalika was staged at the Sinha-Sadan in his honour which was deeply appreciated by him. Before he left Santiniketan, he announced a donation of Rs. 20,000 to the Sangit-Bhavana building, the construction of which has already begun.

At the same time, we had also with us Miss Muriel Lester and her party of eminent visitors from the Tambaram Christian Conference. This has been her

(Continued on Page 62)

## Sriniketan\*

Rabindranath Tagore

From the banks of the Padma I came to settle down in Santiniketan Ashrama, forty years ago, with the idea of starting work in education and village reform. My resources as well as practical experience were meagre; most of my life, from childhood, I had been immersed in literary activities.

My work in our zamindary in North Bengal had given me an intimate contact with village life. With my own eyes I had seen how scarcity of water affected rural homes; I had observed the effects of disease and starvation on the emaciated population. Repeated events proved to me that apathy born of ignorance plunged men into utter misery and made them easy victims of betrayal. The anglicised urban gentry of that period, engaged in pursuing the reverse tide of progress, could hardly dream that the weight of helpless humanity would sooner sink our craft than make it advance.

A tornado of self-rebellion had come to our land shaking our political delusions. That was a time when even an uninitiated person like myself was made to accept presidentship of the provincial Congress. I got acquainted with many of the political leaders of the day. To some of them I pointed out that the drama of national self-expression could not be real if rural India were banished to the outer darkness behind the stage.

My suggestion was turned down in very unambiguous language. On that day I decided that a poet's dream alone could offer companionship to my project: there was, apparently, no place for it elsewhere.

Long before this I had started rural service with scanty means and a few companions. There had not been enough time for any history of that work to become recognisable. Let that be.

My agony did not merely show itself in my poems, it dragged the poet himself to the arduous field of work. What power could an indigent worker possess save in his vision of truth?

My aspiration did not claim any wide area for cultivation; it did seem possible, however, that a strip of land could be found for sowing seeds.

In the hard soil of Birbhum I started planting seeds. The promise of the seed lies secret in the ground beneath. Being invisible, its existence can be doubted; nobody can be blamed, at least, for affecting derision. I had the bad reputation, moreover, of being rich and what is worse, of being a poet. Aggrieved, I wondered —where then are those competent persons who were neither rich nor poetic? But the period of obscurity is that of true preparation. For long years I did not attempt to bring my work before the public. Had I done so, my immature work would have merited neglect.

\* English Translation ( by Dr. Amiya Chakravarty ) of Gurudeva's address at the opening ceremony of the Sriniketan Emporium in Calcutta on Dec. 8, 1938. The address was read by Rathindranath Tagore and the meeting was presided over by Raja Ravi Chandra Bose.

No clear-cut plan was ready in my mind when I began. Indefiniteness is perhaps natural to the initial stages of work launched by a poet. Creation, in all its forms, starts at the threshold of the unrevealed; from the subconscious it evolves towards the conscious. Construction, on the other hand, begins with a plan; any deviation is promptly corrected. Where living growth is concerned, I believe in natural unfoldment. My rural service has followed such a course; this takes time but the roots go deeper.

Though I had no definite plans, I had some general principles. Readers of my "Sadhana" period know that I repudiated political dependence in no uncertain terms. Fight for freedom would be absurd while hugging the fetters of dependence.

Not only in foreign rule, but also in home affairs, the shame of slavery must lie equally heavy. Attempting to help villagers from outside would be, I knew, an unnatural procedure. Even in deserts hidden springs can be found; coming from within they can never go dry. Such springs we must seek in the villages. People have to find faith in their own strength and in the organising of strength. That, for me, is an essential principle. Proof of our partial success lies in the fact that our neighbouring villages have established health centres with their combined initiative.

Creative joy, we must realise, is natural to man. This, again, is a principle for our workers to remember. Such joy marks the difference between man and animals; in it lies his greatness. Villages do not merely exist to carry on agriculture, to fill their own stomachs

barely and ours to repletion. Folk literature, folk arts, folk music, and folk dances have appeared in all lands in a wealth of spontaneous expression. Our village ponds have now gone dry and become polluted: the same applies to rural reservoirs of happiness. Consequently, the villagers have been driven away from man's supreme privilege—the creation of beauty; what is more, chronic listlessness has sapped their body and mind. Devoid of joy, life lacks desire even for self-protection, it yields to merest attack. Our false heroes, robustly scoffing at creative joy as luxury, forget that love of beauty goes with manliness. Desiccated timber is bereft of growth, it is there in the tree exulting in flower and foliage. Great races of men have not only fought battles but enjoyed beauty; they have enriched humanity by artistic achievement. Not self-drying vanity but collaboration with the Creator has been their glory.

My aim has been to assist in bringing the flood-tide of life's joy to the arid villages, urging them towards diverse self-expression. Creative work is undertaken, not for mere affluence but for self-attainment.

Let me give an example. Our girls started giving embroidery lessons to girls of a neighbouring village. One of the students did beautiful work on a piece of cloth. She was poor: to help and encourage her the teacher offered a handsome price. The girl would not sell her handiwork. Enthusiasm such as this cannot be measured by market values, neither can it be dismissed as worthless. Permeation of this spirit would surely lead villages to new paths of self-preservation. Bar-

barians, bound in the coils of livelihood, unable to express their joy in life, offer the most lamentable spectacle of humiliation.

We have not ignored the problem of livelihood ; but we have also recognised man's essential hunger for beauty. Physical bravado we have not held up as the only form of heroism. Greece, we would admit, reached the heights of culture: her dance and song, drama and art attained an exquisite perfection--and yet this wealth was not for the select few but for all. But even to-day we find sincere workers who deal with rural culture in a miserly fashion, doling out their services with pity but with little respect. My attitude is different. Assessing culture by economic standards I consider to be wholly unworthy; distributing human privileges according to the weight of ledger books is sordid commercialism. Financial difficulties have prevented me from fully applying my ideas but it also takes time to train up the minds of workers. My own time will probably have ended before that happens, but I must leave my ideas explained.

Worshippers of dimension declare that in a country of this size, our work which covers a small area must prove ineffective. But truth, surely, is established by inherent worth, not by dimension. We possess India in the portion that we may occupy by Truth. The candle finds its illumination in the lighted wick.

To-day's exhibition represents one particular aspect of our work at Sriniketan. From modest beginnings these crafts

have slowly developed, some more time must pass before they can get well-adjusted to the basic life of the villages. Not being of the factory, our work must win living recognition from the people themselves. Without financial support we could not maintain it, and therefore we must hope that artistic recognition of these products will be followed by grant of means to make our work self-supporting.

I should like, before I conclude, to make an appeal. You are leaders in the field of politics. Once upon a time the kings offered their patronage in the production of national wealth. Such wealth lies not merely in riches but is the creation of beauty. Not *Kuber's* treasury but the lotus of *Lakshmi* is its abode.

You are the symbols of our nationhood. My prayer at your door is laid not before that of the king, but of my Motherland. Accept from me, on behalf of the country, the fruits of my life's effort. In this work as in others I have met with much opposition from my countrymen. It has often taken the form of criticism: that the temple of service raised by me will disappear with my life. If that is so, whose failure will it be, mine or yours ? I appeal to you, therefore: examine if there is any truth in my work, whether sacrificial service has dowered it with wealth from within. If the results satisfy you, take upon yourself, with a gracious heart, the task of preserving this work, and of making it grow. Entering even through the portals of my death, may your own vitality give it perennial life.

(Continued from page 58)

✓ second visit, as she had been here once before in 1934. Miss Lester and the party made a detailed study of our Rural work at Sriniketan and she expressed her appreciation of the progress that we have been able to make during the short period that elapsed between her two visits.

On January 21, we had the honour of a visit from the Congress President Subhas Chandra Bose. This has practically been the first visit from a Congress President in office to our Institution, ( Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru had come as President in 1936, but that was during the Pujah Vacation) and we naturally made the most of the great event. Rastrapati Bose was accorded a cordial reception in the Amra-Kunja soon after his arrival where Gurudeva received him and gave him his blessings. The Rastrapati went through a crowded programme during the two days that he stayed here which included several informal meetings with the students. His troubles were considerably increased by the autograph hunters who besieged him in large numbers from daybreak till night.

And finally on the last day of the month, we had a long-expected visit from Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru who came here to participate in the opening ceremony of the Hindi-Bhavana which is named after the donor, late Rai Bahadur Bisewarlarl Motilal Halwasiya. There was a large and distinguished gathering present for the function which was also attended by Gurudeva and C. F. Andrews. Bhagirath Kanodia on behalf of the trustees of the Halwasiya Trust promised a

further donation of Rs. 5,000/- for the furniture and the equipment of the Bhavana.

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## Alumni News

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We deeply mourn the sad and untimely death of Thakur Somendra Chandra Dev Barman in a railway accident on January 9. He was with us at Santiniketan till the 8th., when he left with H. H. the Maharaja of Tipperah. He started for Lucknow by the ill-fated Dehra-Dun Express which crashed to its doom near Chikchi station in Behar. Though no trace of his has been found, it seems almost certain that he was involved in that accident and was subsequently burnt to ashes in the conflagration that started soon after the train came off the rails.

Somendra Chandra was one of our earlier students and after passing the Matriculation examination, he went with Gurudeva to U. S. A. in 1912 where he graduated from the Harvard University. Since his return home, he had held important offices in the Tipperah State.

May his soul rest in peace!

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## Important Notice

At the last Annual Meeting of the Santiniketan Asramika Sangha, held on December 24, 1938 under the presidentship of Sjt. Dharendra Nath Mukherji, an Ex-Students' Building Fund Committee was formed, and the following were elected members to it:—

Pulin Sen (Calcutta)  
(Convenor)

We expect that our alumni in the different parts of the world will take active interest in it and will help the committee with donations. With their help we hope to build up very soon a new and respectable building which will remove one of our longfelt wants. Donations may be sent to either of the following:—



## In Memoriam

It is with a heavy heart that we announce the death of Miss Juthika Datta, in the early hours of January 9, after a short illness in Calcutta.

After her graduation in Calcutta, she volunteered her services in a honorary capacity to the Visva-Bharati and till a few days before her death she had been working as a teacher at Santiniketan. Her sweet nature, and unostentatious service endeared herself to all and her loss has been keenly felt here.

We offer our heartfelt sympathy to her parents and relations.

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The Publishing Department of the Visva-Bharati has also arranged for publication of a series of authorised translations of the Poet's works in Hindi from original Bengali.

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# VISVA-BHARATI NEWS

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Volume VII

MARCH, 1939

Number IX

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## A Poem

The sea raves and rages,  
The lightning rends the clouds in the sunset sky,  
    below there roars the foaming fury of the water.  
What matters if we reach not the shore  
    but fathom the depth!  
Away with this drooping dejection,  
    the burden of boresome hours!  
Ah, for the freedom of loneliness  
    on the bosom of the boundless sea,  
and the mystery of the untold treasure  
    lost in forlorn lands!

*Rabindranath Tagore*

## Santiniketan and Sriniketan

J Gurudeva went to Calcutta on Feb. 7, for a week's stay, chiefly to participate in the various Visva-Bharati engagements there. He formally inaugurated on Sunday, Feb. 12, the Visva-Bharati Sammilani which will serve as a literary and cultural club in Calcutta for the members of the Visva-Bharati. Charu Chandra Bhattacharya has been appointed Secretary of the Sammilani which will maintain a library for the members of the Association and a reading-room for the general public at 210, Cornwallis Street. Membership will be limited to 200 for the present.

While in Calcutta, Gurudeva attended the performances of "Shyama" and "Chandalika" at the Sree Cinema House and he returned to Santiniketan on Monday, Feb. 13.

During the week, commencing from February 4, three dance-dramas,—"Tasher Desh", "Shyama", and "Chandalika"—were produced in Calcutta on the stage of Sree by the Sangit-Bhavana students in aid of their department. All the performances were upto our best standards and they were well received by the press and the public.

J Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru who came here on January 31, to participate in the opening of the Hindi-Bhavana left for Allahabad on February 2. He met the students at informal discussions on several occasions and was entertained at a social party by the girl students at the Sree-Bhavana. Rastrapati Subhas Chandra Bose came here again on February 2, to

meet Pandit Nehru and they had together private discussions on important political matter. Sjt. Bose's visit was of a very short duration.

Our anniversary celebrations at Sri-niketan, on Feb. 6 and 7, were graced this year by the presence of Babu Rajendra Prasad and the Lord Bishop of Calcutta. There were also present Sjt. Mashruwalla, President of the Gandhi Seva-Sangha, Babu Mathura Prasad, Secretary of the Behar Provincial Congress Committee, and Dr. Prafulla Chandra Ghosh.

Babu Rajendra Prasad opened the exhibition and the Lord Bishop presided over the annual Brati-Balak rally, and distributed the prizes.

Elsewhere in this issue we publish a letter from the Lord Bishop in which he has expressed his views on the aims and achievements of the Visva-Bharati.

Rajendra Babu was not in good health and he could not participate in any public engagements except the one mentioned above. He left for Patna on Feb. 8, but has promised us a longer stay in the near future.

Though the name and fame of our Kala-Bhavana has spread all over India, it is surprising to realise that it was only the other day that for the first time we had an exhibition of our own in Calcutta. The exhibition was held in the halls of the Bangiya Sahitya Parishad and was kept open for a week, commencing from Sunday February 5. No fewer than 276 exhibits, representing paintings, modellings, etchings, dry-points, coloured

## A Letter

Bishop's House,  
Calcutta.  
February the 8th, 1939.

My dear Poet Rabindranath Tagore

I cannot let this day pass without writing to thank<sup>r</sup> you for the great privilege which you have accorded me in receiving me as a guest at Santiniketan and giving me the opportunity of seeing something of the wonderful work, which is being carried on there. It had long been my ambition to visit you there, and my one regret now is that I had not done so long ago. I feel rather like the Queen of Sheba who, after visiting the court of King Solomon, admitted that the half had not been told her. That is certainly true of Santiniketan and I feel that the half cannot be told; for you cannot describe the 'spirit' of a place save in wholly inadequate terms; and it is the spirit pervading the work, in its many diverse branches, which is so impressive.

It seemed to me that certain principles ran through the whole, which I summed up in my own mind by such words as "growth"; for the whole had sprung naturally from the development of the original School; and each department as it reached maturity had separated, as a unit, in the complex structure. 'Comprehension',—for the number of the subjects which found their place there was large, and in all they were related to life in a way which made them of practical value. The artistic spirit pervaded the whole and Indian culture found expression in a way

which made it most instructive, and led me to wish that every Englishman could visit the place and realise something of the richness of Indian culture and revise his opinion of the country and its peoples.

Then the spirit of research was abundantly evident. I can lay no claims to scolarship but, brought up amid scholars, I can appreciate the spirit of research and admire the devotion with which it is pursued. Kshitimohon Sen was most kind in taking me round the research rooms in the Library and also in showing me China Hall

I was very interested in seeing the efforts which were being made to utilise to the full the materials which are in common use in the villages and to show how through them Art can find expression.

Two days is too short a time within which to see and appreciate all that is being done in Santiniketan and Srimiketan; but I have seen enough to make me wish to see more.

It was also a real pleasure to meet the men who so kindly explained to me what they showed, especially Dhiren Sen; and also I was very glad of the opportunity of a talk with Babu Rajendra Prasad and K. G. Mashruwala.

Thanking you once again for this great privilege,

Yours sincerely,  
(sd.) Foss. Calcutta. \*

\* The Lord Bishop of Calcutta and the Metropolitan of India.

## The Hindi-Bhavana

Balraj Sahni, M. A.

As the bus, coming from Bolpur, enters the precincts of the Asrama the visitor will see, to his left, a fine new building, or to be precise, a cluster of buildings, none very tall but trim and comely. This is our Hindi-Bhavana, the latest achievement of Rabindranath and his colleagues to make Visva-Bharati a radiating centre of culture.

For an institution like Visva-Bharati, which relies so much on outside support, it is not always easy to carry decisions into immediate action. The Hindi Bhavana was dreamt of long before it was actualised. For many years it had been felt that research into the medieval literature of India was a matter of utmost necessity, and that a separate, well-equipped department should be created for the purpose. Till recently the attention of scholars has been directed mainly towards the literature of the ancient Sanskrit period. The period after 1000 A. D. has been conveniently labelled as the dark period and ignored. This distinction is highly superficial, because it is intended to draw a parallel with a similar distinction in the West. The medieval period in India can by no means be termed the Dark Age. It is, on the contrary, a magnificent chapter in our history, wherein the life of our country was constantly reacting to new influences. This was a period of sublime architecture, of great heroism, and, in more than one respect, a time when our civilisation was at its highest. It is impossible that literature should have lagged behind. Rabindranath, during a visit to Rajputana, was

deeply stirred by the vigorous grandeur of the old *Charan* (minstrel) war-songs. Adhyaksha Kshitimohan Sen's lifelong researches into *Bhakti* and *Sant* movements have revealed the vast nature of these branches of medieval literature. It was felt, therefore, that this important work should be taken up by Visva-Bharati more systematically. In doing so not only the modern Hindi literature would gain but the other literatures also would discern some of their own traditions and influences; because old Hindi is the background of almost every literature of Northern India, Tamil occupying the same position in the South.

Side by side with this, the steady increase in the number of Hindi students in Santiniketan made it desirable that the department should be further strengthened, and given more facilities.

A venture like this, however, costs money, and it is not always easy to get it, specially when the public only imperfectly realises the importance of such things. However, money was eventually available, mainly through the active interest of influential friends like Sj. B. Kanodia and Sj. Sitaram Sakseria in Calcutta, and on January 31, 1939, the formal opening of the building was performed by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. Lovers of Hindi from all parts of India, some well-known writers among them, participated in the function and helped to make it a success. The Poet, in his address of welcome, emphasised once more the importance of breaking narrow provincial and communal barriers,

whose source is nothing save petty and ignorant prejudice.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, in his address, raised some very interesting points. By taking a few examples he showed how Hindustani was suffering at the hands of cheap journalism, and how a fruitless controversy was being carried on about Hindi and Urdu by people who were masters of neither. A literary artist, he went on to say, was by nature a person of wide sympathies, for whom words had a sense and a sound, but no religion. Basically, both Hindi and Urdu are one and the same language. Unluckily in their literary forms they have drifted apart on account of their different scripts as well as other reasons. If we are wise we should endeavour to know both the literatures well, which is not difficult, rather than make a virtue of our ignorance. Only thus can we look forward to a rich literature in Hindustani.

It is now a month since the opening ceremony took place. During this time a large number of letters have been received at Santiniketan from lovers of Hindi literature inquiring about the future programme of the Hindi-Bhavana. This is indeed very encouraging, and as it is impossible to give an adequate reply to every individual letter a few words in this connection will not be inappropriate here.

In a sense the Hindi Bhavana has come into being at an inopportune moment. The declaration of Hindustani as the *lingua franca* by the Congress has given rise to feverish arguments of all kinds. The press has exploited this opportunity to the full. Every paper, whether a daily or a weekly, has set out to convince the world of the

conclusiveness of its own opinions. It is not impossible, therefore, that the inauguration of Hindi Bhavana at a time like this in Santiniketan, an institution which has acquired a nation-wide significance, may lead some people to see more in it than there is.

Nothing could be more erroneous than that. Hindi-Bhavana has nothing at all to do with politics, nor does it care in the least whether Hindi is or is not the national language. Pandit Hazari Prasad Dwivedi has made it clear in his articles in the "Vishal Bharat" that nothing is more odious to us than to talk of superiority or inferiority of different literatures. Hindi Bhavana is not intended to be a centre of Hindi *Prachar*, or a literary club.

First and last—it is meant to be a place of genuine scholarly labour, nothing more spectacular. Our immediate programme of work is under consideration; but the aim is definite.

As yet we are not in a position to say which branch of work will be taken up first. Our means are limited. There are, however, three important items which we wish we could take up simultaneously. First, as mentioned above, research into old Hindi literature and language; second, translation of important English and Bengali books into Hindi; third, a study of modern tendencies.

The building is complete but the needs are still many. A good library is urgently needed. Provision has to be made for some more scholars and research workers.

As time goes on we may aspire to have a quarterly review of our own, through whose pages some of our humble attempts may be presented before the public from time to time.



By Sukhamay Mitra

(Continued from page 66.)

woodcuts and linocuts were on view. It is to be hoped that we shall be able to organise such an exhibition every year in Calcutta during the cold season, for the experiment this year has been quite successful.

...

Nalinaksha Nanda, B.A., B.Sc. (Honours in Physics), B.T., has been appointed an Adhyapaka in Geography in the Patha-Bhavana with effect from Feb. 15. The post had been lying vacant for some time and we are glad that we have at last got a properly qualified person for this important subject.

...

The Raja Saheb of Awagarh, one of our most generous benefactors, arrived in

Santiniketan for a short stay on February 13. In the morning of February 14, he was accorded a public reception in the Amra-Kunja in the traditional style. In welcoming him on behalf of the Asrama, Gurudeva said that he was glad to have an opportunity of paying his homage to one of the last remnants of Kshatriyas who maintained a close relationship with the cultural activities of the country. His name would for ever remain associated with the history of our institution.

The Raja Saheb left for his estate on February 24, after having closely studied the work of all the departments, both at Santiniketan and Sriniketan.

## Alumni News

Dhiren Krishna Dev Barman organised an exhibition of his pictures in Bombay at the Cama Oriental Institute which proved to be a great success. It was formally opened on Feb. 6 by Sir Cowasjee Jehangir, Bart., and lasted for a week. It may be recalled here that he was one of the four Indian artists chosen by the Government of India for the decoration of the India House in London.

...

Dr. Amiya Chakravarty has been appointed by the Calcutta University to deliver a course of four Readership Lectures on Modern English Poetry during this term. His book, "The Dynasts", has just been published by the Oxford University Press.

...

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# VISVA-BHARATI NEWS

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Volume VII

APRIL, 1939

Number X

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## Thought Relic

Being by nature social, some portion of our energies we must employ to keep up the flow of sociality. But its field and action are on the surface. The ripples of gregariousness are not the deep currents of human love. The men who have strong social instincts are not necessarily lovers of man.

The men who are spendthrifts very often lack true generosity. In most cases they cannot give, but can only spend. And also like them the social men spend themselves but not give themselves. This reckless spending creates a vacuum which we fill up with the debris of activities whose object is to bury time.

*Rabindranath Tagore*

## Santiniketan and Sriniketan

Rabindranath went to Calcutta on the last day of March to participate in the Spring Festival organised by the Visva-Bharati Sammilani. It is understood that soon after the celebration of the Bengali New Year (April 15) he will leave for Kalimpong where he will spend the summer months.

...

<sup>a</sup> Upacharya C. F. Andrews left for Delhi on March 17 to be with Mahatma Gandhi and help him in his work there. We are much distressed to learn that he is suffering from high blood pressure and has had to cancel all his engagements and seek shelter in the Hindu Rao Hospital. As soon as he is better and fit to undertake the journey, he will leave for a quiet hill station in South India.

His new book "The True India" has just been published by Messrs George Allen & Unwin Ltd. It is dedicated with love to Gurudeva.

...

We gratefully acknowledge a donation of Rs. 1,000 from the Calcutta University earmarked for improvement in the College laboratories. The Institution badly requires a new building for the Science Department but till sufficient funds are forthcoming, we will have to remain content with the present arrangement even though it is grossly inadequate for the important purpose it serves.

...

<sup>b</sup> Mr. John Sargent, the Educational Commissioner with the Government of India came to Santiniketan on a short visit on Sun-

day, March 17. We had also a visit on March 13, from the famous Malabar poet Vallathol and a party of students from the Kerala Kala-Mandalam who gave here for our entertainment a demonstration of the Kathakali style of dancing.

...

<sup>c</sup> The Gandhi Punyaha was duly celebrated in the Asrama on the tenth of March, when all the servants were given a holiday and their work done by the students and the teachers. The ceremony has an interesting history. In 1915, Mahatma Gandhi sent to Santiniketan a number of students from the Pheonix Asrama in South Africa after he had disbanded the school there owing to his departure from that country. He himself came to and lived in Santiniketan, for a few months. True to his principles he desired that in an institution like Santiniketan, the students should do all the work themselves and dispense with the luxury of engaging servants and scavengers and under his personal guidance, an attempt was made in this direction, which however failed after a short trial and we had to revert again to the old practice. But in memory of that, we still observe the Gandhi Day on the tenth of March every year.

...

<sup>d</sup> We had our Spring Festival on March 5. There was a gathering of the inmates of the Asrama in the morning in the Amra-Kunja and a musical programme in the evening. Everything was done on a very simple scale this year as there was great anxiety in the

## Educational Fallacies\*

A. Aronson.

(Siksha-Bhavana)

The abundance of educational theories to day justifies itself by the fact that educationists begin to realize that the old system of training the young is no longer in harmony with an entirely new environment; another and more important reason, however, is that education in the modern age extends over a much longer period than in former times, that to-day mental and social adulthood are no longer considered coincident with physical maturity. Society, therefore, endeavours to provide the child with a suitable environment until it considers the child fit for an intelligent mental, social, and economic adjustment to the very complex machinery of a modern state. As the home and family in civilized society no longer seem to furnish the atmosphere for this growth, they are being replaced by an organised effort of society at large which finds its expression in the educational service. With the increasing complexity of modern society we find a proportionate increase in the length of the educational service. No wonder, therefore, that educationists are anxious to define education in terms of this new social environment.

Educationists advocating a "primitive" and unsophisticated educational process frequently base their argument upon the actual educational system in a primitive tribe; we find this tendency represented from the "Emile" of J. J. Rousseau to the "Fantasia of the Unconscious" of D. H. Lawrence. We know, however, to-day that even the most

"primitive" and "backward" tribes give a definite early training in respect of property, etiquette, correct physical adjustments, and even sometimes social responsibility; to instil into children an early sense of shame, fear, and remorse is frequently the very aim of primitive education; it seems that even in an uncivilized tribe no social control can be possible without a certain amount of inhibition and repression. Those, therefore, who believe that it is the function of education "to prepare us for complete living" must be aware of the fact that a social adjustment can only be brought about by some kind of outside pressure upon the individual. Everything depends upon the *kind* of pressure; in the 19th century it was undoubtedly too "intellectual"; children were taught to think in terms of ideas about the social order and their own social adjustment before they reached mental maturity; with regard to this "intellectual" education a "return to nature", to primitiveness, and unsophistication can only be welcome; "complete living" in that sense really means an intelligent adjustment and dynamic activity in the service of a social group: "The first process of education is obviously not a mental process... there should be no effort made to teach children to think, to have ideas. Only to lift them and urge them into dynamic activity... A child must learn the fulness of spontaneous motion..." (D. H. Lawrence: Fantasia of the Unconscious, 1930, p. 69.)

\* The following is an extract from a book on "Education and the Social Group" which will be published in the near future.

This tendency towards simplification of the educational process—however welcome it may be from a psychological point of view—does not reckon with the concrete realities of social life. One of these realities consists in the fact that education, in primitive tribes as well as in civilized societies, safeguards a certain social and economic position of the individual within the group; knowledge to-day, as ever before, is a means for the acquisition of wealth and conduces to well-being. Parents send their children to educational institutions so that they may have the “education of a gentleman”, that is to say that they may be able in adult life to earn their living and to build up a social position. Education, therefore, is especially to-day, no longer an aim in itself (the training for “complete living” and for “dynamic activity”) but a means towards the attainment of a social and economic standing. We should not overlook this “materialistic” tendency which is preponderant just now in many countries of the West and especially in America. This social philosophy which emphasizes the business (or gentleman) point of view is as fallacious as the one that insists on dynamic activity alone as the aim of education. They are both one sided and unaware of the fact that apart from the individual instincts and the economic interests of the social group, there are multiple other aspects of social life or of culture which are being neglected in their educational aspirations. In order to illustrate this tendency to correlate the educational system of a social group with its economic activities, we may quote a pamphlet published by the National Education Association of America and widely distributed in the United States, which

declares that “the free public school and American business are partners, each supplementing and strengthening the other”, which denounces as distorted the view which looks upon business as “a merely materialistic acquisitive enterprise”, and which demonstrates that education trains efficient “leaders and followers” for the business world and promotes profit by making better customers of the masses; lastly we read there that “setting aside all the important cultural, civic, and social values of education, the schools can easily justify themselves in their contribution to business.” (N. F. A., “The schools and business”, Washington, n.d., p. 22.)

We do not pretend that this pamphlet actually represents public opinion in America and the West to-day; yet it certainly represents a good deal of what is actually going on with regard to education in civilized countries. The result of this state of affairs is that education has become part of the struggle for power between various classes, races, religions, and nations. This struggle which we can observe everywhere brings about that education is no longer concerned with the “complete living” of the individual or with his personal welfare, but with ulterior political purposes.

Although there is “progress” wherever we go, education seems to be still in its childhood. The training of the young in a savage tribe and in an up-to-date public-school represents so many similarities that we can hardly speak of educational progress without blushing. The kind of education which is emphasized to-day, that for economic, social, and political leadership, hardly justifies the word progress. Primitive education was, at least from a super-

ficial angle, uniformly successful. The tradition of the social group was absorbed by the young. To-day we meet everywhere with educational failures and as "tradition" has been replaced by other interests, it can no longer be absorbed. Education, from being a function of culture, has become a science.

It seems as though the aim of education to-day is to prepare the individual for some kind of mechanized social adjustment which does not involve any responsibility individual or social. Plenty of knowledge will be provided during childhood and in its standardized form it will be understandable to everybody ; social progress through education again belongs to the realm of utopian literature. The best method of measuring how far children have been prepared for "social change" or an intelligent social adjustment in schools would be a survey of one or several schools with special reference to this problem. Fortunately such a survey has been made in America ; it will illustrate best of all the argument that children to day are not trained for an "ideal" society nor for an intelligent social adjustment. It is a survey of 333 children's social concepts, of which 221 are of the elementary-school level and 112 of the high-school level. Asked to define their conception of Democracy only 33.00% of the total number defined it as "Government by the people"; 11.80% could not give any answer at all ; some children ( 1.22% ) thought it is a "rule by a king" and one actually replied "just one idea but a good one". Asked to define their conception of "Interdependent World", 0.91% answered "isolation impossible, League of Nations encourages interdepend-

ence", 26.00% defined it as countries "depend for different articles on one another", whereas 22.38% had no conception whatsoever of an "Interdependent World". And finally, when asked for their conception of Liberalism, 27.20% of the total number of these children had never heard of it, 17.50% defined it as "to give charity freely", 10.60% as "have liberty, to be free", only 4.52% as "free policy in vote, speech, religion", and 2.72% "where people go to libraries". ( Hyman Meltzer : Children's social concepts. A study of their nature and development. New York, 1925. )

The complete lack of standards in the modern educational process is responsible for this amazing ignorance in the most elementary principles of political life to-day. It should be the aim of an institution such as Santiniketan to supply the students with values which would lead them towards an intelligent social adjustment. The breakdown of moral, religious, and social standards in the West should not prevent us from creating new standards and values in education more congenial to our own environment. The student must be taught to recognize a larger unity which includes and gives meaning to the lesser social units within which the individual carries on the business of everyday life.

It is in this context that the aims of Santiniketan must be put into practice, namely to build up in the students the habits of mind which secure social change, to make education again a function of culture, participating in all the aspects of social life, and in which both the cultural and economic interests of the social group should be represented in their true proportion.



By Mena Kapadia.

(Continued from page 74)

minds of all of us owing to the fast which Mahatma Gandhi had embarked upon due to the Rajkot trouble.

...

It is expected that the pavilion of the teachers' Tea Club ( popularly known as Cha-Chakra ) will be formally opened on the first day of the Bengali New Year on April 15. The expense in connection with the building has been donated by Sreejukta

Kamala Devi in sacred memory of her husband Late Dinendranath Tagore, who had been most intimately connected with the Cha-Chakra ever since its inception. Some more money is now needed for the furniture, equipment etc. and contributions are invited from past members of the club and well-wishers of the Asrama. They will be gratefully received by Tejes Chandra Sen on behalf of the Cha-Chakra and announced in the Visva-Bharati News.

### Alumni News

The first general meeting of the members of the Calcutta Branch of the Asramika Sangha took place in the Visva-Bharati Committee room at 210 Cornwallis Street, Calcutta on March 25. At the request of the Secretary, Visva-Bharati Sammilani, a sub-committee of twelve members with Praimatha Nath Bishi as convenor was formed to help the Sammilani in its work. It was also decided to celebrate Gurudeva's coming birth-day with due solemnity.

At the meeting Mrs. Arundhati Ghose ( nee Mitra ) announced a donation of Rs. 150/- to the Building Fund of the Sangha.

...

It will be remembered that at the last annual meeting of Asramika Sangha held at Santiniketan during the Pous Utsab, it was decided to create a special Building Fund for the Ex-students' Bungalow at Santiniketan. Our existing bungalow is in a dilapidated condition and does us little credit. With the help of our members, scattered all over the world, we hope to build very soon a new and respectable building which will remove one of our long felt wants. Donations may be sent to either of the following : --

( 1 ) Rabindranath Tagore,  
Santiniketan.

( 2 ) Pulin Sen  
120/2 Upper Circular Road, Calcutta.

### Important Notice

We are glad to announce that beginning from the volume V of the Visva-Bharati Quarterly ( New Series ) i. e. May 1939, the members of Visva-Bharati will get Visva-Bharati Quarterly at the reduced concession rate of Rs. 4/- a year. We hope the members will take advantage of this concession which is being allowed in their interest.

# HINDI TRANSLATIONS OF Poet Rabindranath Tagore's Works.



The copyright of the Bengali works of Rabindranath Tagore and their translations in Hindi belongs to Visva-Bharati and the authorities of the Visva-Bharati have purchased the stock in hand of all Hindi translations of Rabindranath Tagore's works from the Prabasi Office which was authorised by the author to publish Hindi translations. The Hindi works are now being printed and published by the Publishing Department of the Visva-Bharati and will be available at the Visva-Bharati Book-Shop, 210, Cornwallis Street, Calcutta.

The Publishing Department of the Visva-Bharati has also arranged for publication of a series of authorised translations of the Poet's works in Hindi from original Bengali.

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# VISVA-BHARATI NEWS

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Number XI

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## The New Year\*

Like a fruit shaken free by an impatient wind  
from the veils of its mother flower,  
thou comest, New Year, whirling in a frantic dance  
amidst the stampede of the wind lashed clouds  
and infuriate showers,  
while trampled by thy turbulence  
are scattered away the faded and the frail  
in an eddying agony of death.

Thou art no dreamer afloat on a languorous breeze  
lingering among the hesitant whisper and hum  
of an uncertain season.

Thine is a majestic march, O terrible stranger,  
thundering forth an ominous incantation,  
driving the days on to the perils of a pathless dark,  
where thou carriest a dumb signal in thy banner,  
a decree of destiny undeciphered.

\* The Bengali year which closes about the middle of April. This is a free translation of a part of the original Bengali poem "Barsha-Shesh" ( 1898 ). First published in the *Spectator*, 10 Jan. 1931.

## Santiniketan & Sriniketan

✓ On the 15th of April, the asrama celebrated the Bengali New Year. In the morning Gurudev addressed a large gathering of the inmates and visitors in the *mandir*. A brief summary of the address is given below :—

"Once more we gather together to greet another new year. Most of you have many long years of happiness and prosperity before you ; but I have nearly come to the end of my road. To-day I may only look back or look into myself to see what little I have achieved and reckon thereby the sum-total of my experience.

"World and life have both been for me a source of perpetual wonder, a perennial joy that has not run dry up till this day. How can I forget that it was given me to create beauty out of my songs ?

"But my highest bliss has been the intimate contact of my fellow-men. I had probed in vain to learn the Truth until it was given me to realise that the true God was Man indeed and that the one way to be united to Him was the way of love and service.

"There are times when we lose faith in Man and appeal to a mythical Providence to deliver us from evils we perpetrate ourselves. That appeal is lost unless it be addressed to the best that is in us all—to the God that is in us.

"Buddha and Christ have said that to love Man is to follow the religion of truth. This religion demands love, service and sacrifice, requires dedication of our narrow selves for the world at large. Inasmuch as you and I are able to work up to those demands, in so much are we truly human. Our

punishment is of the sorest when we take leave of our human state in a spirit of brutal perversity.

"If at the final reckoning it be found that I have loved Man, even as I have loved this wonderful earth, then I should consider my life well spent indeed !"

...

✓ The Poet's 78th birthday falls on the 9th of May. As, however, the Institution would have been closed then and very few people left in the asrama, it was decided to celebrate the birthday on the evening of the New Year. The happy function took place on the tennis court in front of Uttarayana. Acknowledging the reception, the Poet said that he did not attach any importance to the particular day on which an individual happened to be born. The really significant moment of birth was that supreme moment when one felt the need of truly realizing his self. A human being in the beginning, continued the Poet, remained confined within narrow limits, compressed just like a flower-bud. It was only when the bud began to unfold and expand itself that it received blessings from the sun and the moon and the stars, that it was accepted as an item of offering in the field of worship of the universe. The same thing happened in the life of the Poet. He did not know by what mysterious process he developed and expanded within himself. Speaking for himself, the Poet pointed out, that his childhood days had been spent within very circumscribed limits. True, even in those days he had his literary activities but these

( continued on page 87 )

## Old Memories of the Asram

C. F. Andrews

I have been asked to give some further impressions of those first days, when Willie Pearson and I first came to the Asram ; for that stage of our Asram life is rapidly coming to a close and some part of it at least needs recording. These will be nothing more than scattered notes, which may bring back the memory of the past to some of those to whom I shall refer.

Willie Pearson had already visited the Asram before the year 1913 ; because he had come out to Bengal as a missionary about the year 1908 and had gone down from time to time from Bhowanipore. My own knowledge of the Asram was entirely derived from the pages of the *Modern Review* and from the accounts given by Susil Kumar Rudra and Nisikanta Sen as to the greatness of Rabindranath Tagore. I have told the story how I met Willie Pearson in Cromwell Road, Kensington, London, desperately homesick for India, and warned by the doctors not to go back to Bengal because of a peculiarly bad form of rheumatism, which he had contracted in Calcutta. There was the possibility, however, of his coming to Delhi where the climate was much drier. Without even telling him, I booked his berth on the steamer and settled the whole matter. He was in such a state of indecision, that I knew he could not settle it for himself. He began to get better from the very day this decision was made for him, and a single year in the dry climate of Delhi completely cured the rheumatism from which he had suffered so much both in Calcutta and in England.

Then we both began to devise plans for

coming together to Santiniketan in the year 1913. Willie was not allowed as yet by the doctors to face a monsoon term and went with Raghbir Singh, if I remember right, to Kashmir instead. As soon as July began I came down to the Asram on a visit ; for it had been already decided that after Easter, 1913, I could give up my work in Delhi and as soon as the Poet came back from America (where he had gone in 1913) I hoped along with Willie Pearson to join the Asram altogether.

( 2 )

That monsoon term, in 1913, was a fore-taste of Paradise for me ! At least, that is what it seems when I now look back ! It was so utterly different from the school education that I had been used to in India, ever since I had come out to Delhi in the beginning of 1904. First of all, Bengal differed so much from the Panjab. At that time, it seemed to me to be a whole generation at least in advance of any thing I had ever met with hitherto. There was a beauty in every single thing, that went home to me at once—the open country on every side of the Asram ; the scattered palm trees on the far horizon ; the vast dome of sky overhead with the dark blue monsoon rain clouds to be followed by great white clouds after the storm had passed over ; the long line of palm trees standing like sentinels above the water of the *Bandh* where they were reflected ; the Santal villages nestling under the trees ; the glorious picnic walks when we took our meal

to the banks of the Kopai river ; the splendour of the sky at dawn and the red after-glow at eventide ; the moonlight shining through the clouds after rain ; the deep mystery of those still evenings when I sat out on the terrace at Santiniketan and heard the gentle rustling of the leaves as a sudden breeze broke the silence—all these things carried me into a new region of beauty to which I responded as if expecting each day some fresh surprise. I remember how I borrowed some water colours and began to try to put down on paper some of these wonderful effects, though I had not touched a paint brush for many years.

( 3 )

Rabindranath Tagore had asked Dipu Babu, his nephew, to look after my bodily needs ; but I soon found out that he wanted to treat me in European fashion, as a Sahib, and so I went instead to the general kitchen. His relief was great ; and a compromise was reached, whereby he provided me with tea and bread and jam in the early morning and in the afternoon.

My chief *personal* impression of the Asram was the friendliness of every one, right on to the smallest child, even though I could not speak a word of Bengali. Very soon, after my arrival, I was given classes in conversational English,—especially by the direct method,—with the smaller boys. Nothing could have been more enjoyable than these. Of the teachers who have continued from those days to the present time, Kshitimohan Babu is one of the very few. I cannot quite remember whether Prabhat and Tejesh Babu were then teaching. Certainly Hari Babu was engaged even then on his dictionary, and I looked upon this work with awe, according to the proverb

*omne ignotum pro magnifico.* Ajit Babu and Nepal Babu taught English and History respectively. Jagadananda Babu taught Mathematics. The classes were all exceptionally small and the school itself, if I remember rightly, did not reach 100. Nagen Aich taught junior mathematics. Santosh Mazumdar was the "house father" of the very junior children. But I must not even attempt to recall the whole staff. Those I have mentioned came at once to my mind and I have jotted them down.

( 4 )

Each morning, we began very early. The choir ( baitalik ) went round sometimes even before 4-30 a.m., and we were all up and ready for Meditation at 5 a.m. Each boy took his mat on to the *maidan*, and sat towards the rising sun. The interval for this silent meditation was about 20 minutes, and then we ended with the prayer, grouped together in different circles. The morning routine was not very unlike what we do at present. But it must be remembered that the school was comparatively small and the buildings were very few and far between. The mango grove itself was the chief place for lessons and when it rained we went into the dormitories and sat on the sides of the cots. Looking back I can hardly remember any 'Art' side at all. In that respect the change has been enormous. On the other hand, with Dinu Babu's glorious voice and perfect memory of the Poet's songs, the musical and dramatic sides were very well developed. In the evenings, there were abundant opportunities for drama,—often made up on the spur of the moment ; and the literary clubs were almost as numerous as the school classes. The youngest boys had their own Sahitya Sabha.

( 5 )

Football was very much in the ascendant. There were two very famous school players, Gour and Saroj Babu. I cannot remember whether they had already left the school in 1913. It seems to me as if they had ; and that they came back as teachers later. Certainly, it was marvellous what our boys could do in football ; and when the Mohan Bagan came over, we had a holiday for the whole day, if Jagadananda Babu was in a good humour. It was very difficult, in our small quarters, to accommodate the large number who came ( for far more always arrived than those who actually played ! ) and usually they camped out in the lower half of Santiniketan. In the evening, after the match was over, we would have songs and a dramatic performance.

On every *Purnima* if the weather was fine, we used to go out to some favourite spot in the country and take our evening meal there. Afterwards, we would spend the rest of the evening in the moon light with all its entrancing beauty while we listened to songs and music.

Those were wonderful evenings which I can never forget and we used to look forward to them all through the day. In the early afternoon, the boys would be busy with their rehearsing of the play they were going to perform, and the teachers took their parts along with the boys. Jagadananda Babu was a famous actor for any comic part, and as soon as he appeared on the stage there would be loud roars of laughter. His famous part, which went on for many years, was the old miserly man, Lackeshwar, in *Sarat Utsava*. Kshitimohan Babu used to take the part of Thakur Dada.

( 6 )

After the Puja Holidays of 1913 Willie and I had intended to take our seats permanently in the Asram. Then two events happened almost simultaneously. First came the news in all the papers that the Poet, Rabindranath Tagore, had been awarded the Nobel Prize for World Literature. There was universal rejoicing not only in India but all over the East. For this was the first occasion when a poet of Asia had received this world distinction. It seemed to be the crown of his achievement which had begun by the publication of *Gitanjali*, the *Gardener* and the *Crescent Moon*.

The second thing touched both of us personally and led to our further delay in coming to the Asram. For Mr. G. K. Gokhale had asked us by telegram to go out from Calcutta by sea to South Africa in a very few days' time, in order to take our part in the passive resistance struggle under Mahatma Gandhi. I was at the Asram when the telegram came ( Willie Pearson was still at Delhi ) and when I showed it to Gurudev he sent us away with his blessing. He gave us the *mantram* ( which we repeat so often in our prayer time ) to take with us,—

Satyam, Gyanam, Anantam Brahman,  
Ananda rupam amritam yad vibhati,  
Santam, Sivam, Advaitam.

It was of wonderful help and comfort to us on our journey and also during the difficult days that were before us.

But I must not go on any longer with these rambling recollections, for it is already past the time when I should be asleep. Yet it has been delightful thus to recall these half-forgotten memories of more than a quarter of a century ago !

*The following extract from a letter written by an American friend to Rathindranath Tagore may be of interest to our readers.*

April 2, 1939.

Dear Friend,

One delays writing letters these days, hoping that in a week, in a month, there will be a happier world background for a friendly note. One's thoughts are deadened and the spirit crushed by the terrible *karma* ( is that the right word ? ) that is unfolding all about us.

The past week we have read parts of a new book—*Betrayal in Central Europe*, by G. E. Gedye—an English journalist of Vienna and Prague. Terrible truths—I could not read some of it. He sums up much when he refers to *Führer* Chamberlain. We are expecting the common people of Germany to play a decisive part soon in the situation.

We have received the reprint 'Poet to Poet' and also the earlier letter to your father by Noguchi. The latter I sent to 'Asia' magazine and enclose the letter of appreciation of Mr. Walsh. India is fortunate to have a Poet and a Mahatma. Here in the U.S.A. we need a Lincoln. Then Spain might have been spared.

No, one is not drawn to Europe at this time. A French lady living in S. America, took her little daughter to France this winter, in order that she might see Paris before it was destroyed. It makes one shiver.

You will be commemorating the Poet's birthday at about the time this arrives. We send our grateful remembrance for all the

light and beauty that has come into our lives from this Singer of the East.

Our loving greetings to all.

Affectionately,

. . . .

\* \* \* \*

[ *We are happy to give publicity to the following appeal for information from the Director of the Institute of Oriental Studies, Leningrad —Ed* ]

INSTITUT DES ÉTUDES ORIENTALES DE  
L'ACADEMIE DES SCIENCES

de l'Union des Républiques Soviétiques Socialistiques  
Leningrad 1

Rue de Tiflis, 1, téléph. 222-07

Dear Sir,

The Institute of Oriental Studies of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR is preparing a volume for publication on the subject: "Maxim Gorky and Oriental Literature".

In connection with this the Institute begs you to let it know if there are in the language of your country any works containing  
 ( a ) translations of the works of the great Russian writer, published separately or in any magazines or journals ;  
 ( b ) critical articles by Indian authors on Gorky :  
 ( c ) reminiscences, notes, etc. by Indian authors, concerning the life and work of Gorky.  
 ( d ) facts proving Gorky's influence on modern Indian literature.

In expectation of your kind assistance and thanking you for it in advance,

I remain,

Yours respectfully

( Signature Illegible )

Director of the Institute of Oriental Studies.

(Continued from page 82.)

were confined within a limited sphere. A shy boy of few words that he was, living in an obscure corner of Bengal, it was beyond the scope of his imagination that he would ever be able to step out of the boundaries of his own home.

The Poet concluded by expressing his warm appreciation of the tributes of love paid to him by those who had regard for what had been done by him.

In the evening there was a performance of music and dances in the open air.

The same evening Gurudeva declared open the new pavilion of the Teachers' Tea Club which was named "Dinantika", in memory of the late Dinendranath Tagore who had been most intimately connected with the social life of the ashram. In performing the opening ceremony, the Poet said that Dinendranath was one of those rare personalities who could gather round them by their genial warmth an intimate social circle. It was in the fitness of things that his name should ever remain associated with the pavilion.

Mr. Santidev Ghose of the Music Department, Visva-Bharati, sailed for Java in the last week of April to study the history and technique of Javanese dancing and music. Bali and Siam are included in his itinerary. We wish him a successful tour.

M. J. R. Stapleton, Director of the Calcutta station of the All-India Radio, paid

a visit to Santiniketan on April 4th for presenting to the institution a radio receiver on behalf of the School Broadcast Committee. In making the presentation to Mr. R. N. Tagore, Mr. Stapleton said that the Committee could not have selected a more worthy centre or one at which their gift would be put to better use. Mr. R. N. Tagore, on behalf of the institution, thanked Mr. Stapleton for this free gift to the Visva-Bharati.

...

On April 17th Gurudeva presided over a huge gathering of litterateurs assembled at the Paikpara House in Calcutta, under the auspices of the Visvabharati Sammilani, to celebrate the New Year. In course of his address the Poet ascribed the world-wide unrest to an unfair system of distribution of wealth. Man's selfishness is slowly but surely driving him to his nemesis from which there is no escape, unless the power of good that is in Man is invoked and set in motion.

...

Gurudeva left Santiniketan for Calcutta on April 16th. After a short stay there he went to Puri on the 19th on the invitation of the Premier Biswanath Das. He is staying at the Circuit House as the guest of the Government of Orissa. He had slight temperature when he reached Puri but his health has since improved.

...

The institution closed for the summer recess on April 25th and will re-open on July 1st.

### Important Notice

*We are glad to announce that beginning from the volume V of the Visva-Bharati Quarterly (New Series) i. e. May 1939, the members of Visva-Bharati will get Visva-Bharati Quarterly at the reduced concession rate of Rs. 4/- a year. We hope the members will take advantage of this concession which is being allowed in their interest.*

# HINDI TRANSLATIONS OF Poet Rabindranath Tagore's Works.



The copyright of the Bengali works of Rabindranath Tagore and their translations in Hindi belongs to Visva-Bharati and the authorities of the Visva-Bharati have purchased the stock in hand of all Hindi translations of Rabindranath Tagore's works from the Prabasi Office which was authorised by the author to publish Hindi translations. The Hindi works are now being printed and published by the Publishing Department of the Visva-Bharati and will be available at the Visva-Bharati Book-Shop, 210, Cornwallis Street, Calcutta.

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# VISVA-BHARATI NEWS

Volume VII

JUNE, 1939

Number XII

## To Gurudev

Time can but add to thy Majestic brow  
    The snow white radiance of the mountain height.  
Thou canst look back on all the past years now  
    veiled in the clouds below, while azure light  
Crowns thee with splendour. As a noble singer  
    who never stooped to baseness in thy verse  
Thou hast loved this life, and longed to be a bringer  
    of joy to young and old, who shall rehearse  
Thy songs, and hand them on from age to age,  
    To gather laurels as the seasons roll,  
And give mankind a generous heritage  
    of all the tenderest hopes that touch the soul.  
Poet, while other glories fade and die  
Thy words have won their immortality.

C. F. Andrews

Puri,  
May 9th, 1939.

## Santiniketan and Sriniketan

✓ Rabindranath, who had gone to Puri for a holiday, returned to Calcutta on May 11 and left again the next evening for Mungpu near Darjeeling, where he will spend the summer vacation as the guest of Dr. and Mrs. M. Sen. It will be recalled that last year too he had spent a few weeks at Mungpu during the summer.

He was in Puri at the time of his last birth-day and the people of Orissa made elaborate arrangements for the celebration of the day.

On May 8, a day before his birth-day, representative members of a number of Women's organisations in Orissa assembled in the evening at his place of residence, the Circuit House, and presented a joint address of welcome to him to which he made a suitable reply. This was followed by some musical entertainment.

The main function in connection with the birthday ceremony took place on Tuesday, the 9th of May when a public reception was held in his honour at the invitation of the Premier of Orissa, Hon'ble Sjt. Visvanath Das. The function was attended by thousands, including all the important people of the province, both officials and non-officials. His Excellency the Governor was also represented by an A. D. C. and his Secretary.

On his arrival at the Government Park, where the ceremony took place in a beautifully decorated pandal, Gurudeva was received by the pundits of the Jagannath Temple who recited shastric mantras in his honour and prayed for divine blessings on him. Then followed a large number of addresses from important associations from

all over the province though quite a number of them had to be taken as read in order to save time. C. F. Andrews who was also present at the function read a poem which he had specially composed for the occasion ; it is printed elsewhere in this issue.

Gurudeva replying in Bengali expressed his deep sense of gratitude at Orissa's warm-hearted hospitality and said, "I thank very sincerely my hosts due to whose kind consideration I have enjoyed for long three weeks the restful quiet that my fatigued and age-battered body so sorely needed. To do honour to poets and singers has always been the undying tradition in India but it has been here in Orissa that for the first time one like me has been honoured and entertained by a provincial government and I will not minimise the political importance of this, for it is an honour dedicated to the country's culture, which I, as a poet, am privileged to represent"

On the same occasion, the All India Radio made arrangements for a special Tagore birth-day programme from their Calcutta station.

Gurudeva has considerably improved in health during his stay at Puri and the Orissa Government whose guest he was took all possible steps to make his stay comfortable and interesting.

...

\* Upacharya C. F. Andrews who was with Gurudeva during his stay at Puri left on May 9 for Coonoor where he will spend the summer months. He is much better now,

(Continued on Page 95)

## Rabindranath and the Asrama of Early Days\*

Kshitimohan Sen

In July 1908, I arrived at Bolpur station en route to Santiniketan, to join the teaching staff of the School which had been started there by Rabindranath Tagore seven years before. The night had already fallen and it was raining heavily. At that time bullock carts were the only means of conveyance available. I, however, spent the night at the station and started for my destination on foot early next morning. Bolpur then was sparsely populated and I had not proceeded far when the strains of a distant melody came floating on the morning breeze. The Poet, seated on the balcony of his cottage, Dehali, was welcoming the rising sun with his beautiful song, *Lift me up from slumber, my Lord, . . . etc.* The Poet's voice was exceedingly rich and powerful in those days and in the quiet of an early morning his song could be heard more than a mile away. The grateful memory of the voice which thus greeted me has remained with me to this day.

The asrama in those days was very much smaller and humbler in appearance. There were but few huts, and the teachers shared the same roof with the pupils. The only exception was the late Jagadananda Roy, who being a widower with little children, had a hut to himself. We were a mere handful in the asrama, not exceeding fifty in all, and had our meals in common in the general kitchen. Among my new colleagues I was happy to discover two old friends and

fellow-students, Vidhushekhar Bhattacharya and Bhupendranath Sanyal. While students in Benares they had nicknamed me "Thakurdadai", and to my great embarrassment they now released the secret.

When I arrived the asrama was slowly recovering from the terrible shock caused by the untimely death of Satish Chandra Roy. Those who have read his *Guru Dakshina* would realise what type of man he was: an uncommon intellect wedded to a deep and profound faith in the higher destiny of man. It was, by the way, Satish Chandra who made current the name, "Gurudeva", by which the Poet is known in the asrama, though it was originally Brahmabandhab Upadhyaya who first used it.

Dehali, where the Poet was then staying, was a very small house. I was at first surprised that he should have chosen so humble a residence. It was later when I had come to know him better that I understood that it was characteristic of him not to despise a thing for want of either magnitude or magnificence. It was this same trait which made him love and trust little children, and which maintained his faith in the ideals of this asrama, despite its very humble beginnings.

These ideals were inspired by his deep and sincere faith in the sadhana of ancient India. He wanted to re-create those great traditions of close contact with nature and common humanity which had made the

\* Translated from the original Bengali by Kshitish Roy and reproduced from Vol. V, Part I of Visva-Bharati Quarterly.

forest schools of ancient India ideal centres for the right type of education. At the same time he aimed at delivering the tender, growing minds of little children from the rigid system and lifeless syllabus of the existing schools. He believed that education, to fulfil its purpose, must pay due regard to to the personality of the growing child and insisted on close personal contact between the teacher and his pupil.

On a lovely stretch of upland, near the little station of Bolpur, the poet began his experiment in education with only two pupils. The spot, having been chosen by his father, Maharshi Debendranath Tagore, for quiet meditation and spiritual sadhana, had for him particularly auspicious associations. He had little funds to aid him and had to face innumerable obstacles. A venture like this was naturally regarded by prudent people as a poet's whim, and where it was not received with scepticism, it was greeted with ridicule. Such people need not be blamed, for it is given to very few to perceive great possibilities in small beginnings.

In one of his Poems (*Naivedya* No. 99)\* Rabindranath says: *Give me the strength never to belittle the humble and the poor!* The strength he prayed for has ever distinguished his character. He always had a genuine love and solicitude for the humble tenants on his private estate, who fully returned that love. The following anecdote may show the deep regard in which he was held by them. Once he was to go out on business with the district Magistrate who was an Englishman. In the bureaucratic Bengal of those days, a district Magistrate and a white one at that, used to be

held in the greatest awe. And yet the person who was to arrange for their conveyance secured only one palanquin. When rebuked, he explained that he did not deem it fit that any other person, whoever he might be, could do otherwise than walk, while their beloved master rode.

In the asrama too I found most of the menials were from the "untouchable" stock. But due to the Poet's influence, no one treated them as such, with the exception of one or two fastidious members. This unorthodoxy on a large scale was a common feature of this institution, long before the country adopted it as part of the programme for national regeneration.

For little children too he had love as well as respect. He never ceased to protest against the adult attitude which unconsciously humiliates the child and which is reflected in the so-called "juvenile" branch of our Bengali literature. His own method of teaching children was free from any such complex, with the result that he would draw them very near to him and they would listen to him in rapt attention as though he was one of them. He was their companion, tending birds and other pets with them, teaching them how to take care of trees and flowers. In the evening he would sit among them and entertain them in various ways. He would extemporise stories, talks and poems for them, or would make them act dramas, read poems or essays. These informal gatherings which were known as "majlis", where both teachers and pupils gave free play to their creative expression, were a most important element in the education of children. Towards the success of these educative entertainments the genius

\* বীর্য দেহ কুড়া জনে না কঁচিতে তুছ জান।

of the late Dinendranath Tagore and Ajit Kumar Chakravarty contributed not a little. Sometimes these soirees were arranged in some neighbouring *sal* forest or on the undulating wastes of the neighbouring *khoai* land. On their way back the boys would challenge the Poet to a race and be defeated each time, for thirty years ago he was a strong man and led an active life. He never took a conveyance from Bolpur to the ashrama and always trusted to his legs.

I have already mentioned my old friend, Pandit Vidhushekhar Bhattacharya. Besides him there were Jagadananda Roy the well-known writer on popular science, Haricharan Bandopadhyaya, the venerable lexicographer, and Ajit Kumar Chakravarty, a brilliant writer and litterateur, who, if any one, took the place of Satish Chandra Roy. About one year after my arrival, Nepal Chandra Roy joined the staff. He had wanted to join the Bar and take to politics, but his ex-student, Ajit Kumar, persuaded him to come and work here for a while before he made up his mind. That "while" lasted for more than twenty five years. The Poet has called his nephew, the late Dinendranath Tagore, the keeper of his songs, and so he was. He was a musician of uncommon powers and, as a teacher of Bengali songs, he was incomparable. His music was his free gift to the ashrama and it was mostly due to him that the ashrama was full of a spirit of festive joy. It is his students who have spread the Poet's songs all over India and have made them appreciated. As soon as the Poet had composed a new song, "Dinu" would be called to "catch" it, before the author lost it in the ecstasy of another creation. These songs would pour out of

Rabindranath so fast that he could not retain the original tunes for long. Sometimes "Dinu" would be called in as many as eight times a day and at all hours. Bengal can never be too grateful to Dinendranath for having preserved this treasure of music for future ages.

I have said before that I arrived in the ashrama during the rains. At that time the Poet was first thinking of reviving the ancient and beautiful tradition of celebrating the seasons by appropriate festivals. As, soon after, he was called away from the ashrama on business, he communicated his desire to us and left it to our resources to improvise a festival of the rainy season. We all met and divided our responsibility. Dinu Babu took upon himself to select the suitable songs, Ajit Babu to arrange recitals of Gurudev's poems on rains, while we undertook to cull out from Sanskrit literature appropriate *stokas* for the occasion. The ceremony, which was performed on a dais erected in traditional style against a background of blue screen, was appreciated by all, and the Poet, on his return, expressed his satisfaction at the reported success of the celebration. This was the humble genesis of the beautiful tradition, now associated with Santiniketan, of holding seasonal *utsavas* (festivals), which people come from all over India to witness.

When the autumn came we were again given the task of selecting suitable verses from the *Vadas* for the *utsav*, while the Poet set himself to composing new songs for the season. Like the *shikhi* flowers of that season the songs came in rich profusion, and the Poet began to think of some way of stringing them together round some simple theme. Thus was born the lyrical

drama *Sarodotsav*. Taking advantage of my nickname, Thakurdada, to which I have already referred, the poet put me in for that part when the drama came to be staged. But the Thakurdada of *Sarodotsav* has to sing on the stage, and no amount of my pleading would convince the poet that I could not sing. At last when he discovered that I really could not do justice to his songs, Ajit Chakravarty was asked to take over the part of the Thakurdada, while I was to act the Sanyasi. But the difficulty was only partly removed, for even the Sanyasi has to sing a few songs. At last it was arranged that I was to do the acting and the Poet himself would transmit the music from behind the wings. The audience were amazed at my "wonderful" musical performance

and commented that at last some one had appeared who could rival Rabindranath's voice. I was highly gratified with this easy celebrity and did not reckon what it would cost me later when people invited me to sing in social gatherings and would not accept the excuse that I could not—for had they not heard me with their own ears?

After this, at different occasions, *Achala-yatan*, *Dakghar*, *Raja*, *Falguni*, *Prayashchitta*, and other dramas were staged. These and other plays were all rehearsed under the direction of the Poet, who sometimes took part himself. He was a superb actor, as those who have seen him act will testify. In all these dramatic ventures he had a faithful lieutenant in "Dmu".

*To be continued*

---

## Alumni News

Gurudeva's birthday has been celebrated in various places in India, in which old boys and members of the asram have taken prominent part. Karachi, Delhi, Bangalore, Morana (Ceylon), Netrakona observe this occasion zealously every year.

Newspapers have also published detail reports of the utsava organised by the Asramika Sangha on Sunday the 21st May, in Calcutta at the Deshabandhu Valika Vidyalaya presided over by Sj. Ramananda

Chatterjee. Pandit Kshitimohan Sen spoke at length and made his talk very entertaining by relating many interesting anecdotes of the old days of the asrama. Dr. Nihar Ranjan Roy explained in a few words the vast influence of Rabindranath on the intellectual middle class of Bengal. The President then ended the formal part of the gathering by reminding the audience that it is quite futile to think that the venerable poet is a spent force in any department of thought whatsoever.

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( continued from page 90 )

even though his blood pressure continues to remain considerably above the average.

...

We are glad to welcome Pramathanath Sen-Gupta M. Sc ( Class I, Gold Medalist ) who will rejoin the Siksha-Bhavana as Adhyapaka of Physics from the beginning of the next session in July. He had temporarily left our service in 1937 and comes back after an absence of almost two years.

...

Prof. Tan-Yun-Shan of the Cheena-Bhavana is on his way back to Sriniketan from China and it is expected that he will arrive towards the end of June. Madame Tan is accompanying him as well as an Assistant Professor and three Chinese scholars.

The educational departments at Sriniketan will reopen on July 1, after the summer vacation and the admission in all the departments will continue upto the 15th of July.

The Siksha-Bhavana results in the intermediate examination this year has been very satisfactory ; of 29 students who were sent up 22 passed, which make the percentage of passes little over 75. The University average is about 56. The Science results have been particularly gratifying as all the 7 who were sent up passed.

The Siksha-Bhavana will award this year three scholarships of the value of Rs. 15 per month each, according to merit based on University results.

The two scholarships which have been created out of the funds placed at our disposal by a friend in celebration of the 50th birth anniversary of Rathindranath Tagore

have been awarded to Sreeman Kiritibhusan Bakshi of the Patha-Bhavana and Sreemati Sukriti Devi of the Siksha-Bhavana. Both the scholarships are of a monthly value of Rs. 10.

...

The English department will be considerably strengthened from July next by the appointment of Miss Marjorie Sykes, whose services have been made available to us through the kindness of a number of English Friends like H. G. Wood and Horace Alexander. Miss Sykes is a First Class Tripos of the Cambridge University in English and for the last two years has been working as a teacher in Madras. We offer our grateful thanks to the Friends and a warm welcome to Miss Sykes.

...

Sj. A. V. Thakkar, General Secretary of the All-India Harijan Sevak Sangh, accompanied by Dr Profullachandra Ghosh, visited Sriniketan on May 15th. Sj. Thakkar came to Bolpur in connection with Harijan work in the district of Birbhum.

...

As decided in the last meeting of the Samsad, the Loka-Siksha work has been transferred to the Education department of Sriniketan. Arrangements are being made to extend the organisation and make its usefulness more easily available to those for whom it is intended.

...

We are glad that Sisir Kumar Mitra has returned fully restored in health and joined Sriniketan where he has been attached to the Education Department.

...

Ajay Gupta, formerly of the Patha-Bhavan, took the M.Sc. degree in Industrial Chemistry from the Benares Hindu University this year, and was placed in the First Class.

...

# HINDI TRANSLATIONS OF Poet Rabindranath Tagore's Works.



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# VISVA-BHARATI NEWS

Volume VIII

JULY, 1939

Number I

## Thought Relic

To-day on the sin-laden dust of the earth pours tainted rain from the sky. Our long wait for the cleansing bath in pure water from on high has been repeatedly doomed to disappointment ; the mud is soiling our minds, and marks of blood are also showing. How long can we keep on wiping this away ? Even the pure silence of the empyrean is powerless to clarify the discordant notes of the prayer for peace which is rising from a blood-stained world.

Peace ? Who can truly pray for Peace ? Only they who are ready to renounce.

*Atha dhīrā amūtalvāṇī viditvā*

*Dhruvam adhruvēṣviha na Piārthayantē.*

Men of tranquil mind, being sure of Immortal Truth, never seek the eternal in things of the moment.

*Rabindranath Tagore*

## Santiniketan and Sriniketan

✓ Gurudeva returned from Mungpu on June 19 after a holiday of nearly five weeks there. A few days after his return (June 25) he went to Sriniketan to stay there for a few days. He has improved in his health by the rest and the change, but it is imperatively necessary that in order that he may conserve his energies we should severely curtail his engagements and interviews while at Santiniketan. Guests should not take it as granted that a visit to Santiniketan also includes an interview with the Poet. People desiring to meet him should correspond with his Secretary from before.

...

The new building of the Sangit-Bhavana is nearly completed and classes will be held in the Bhavana from this session. We regret that Miss Amita Sen and Kshitish Chandra Banerjee have resigned their respective appointments in the Music Department. In the latter vacancy Pandit V. V. Warzalwar, Sangit-Visarad of the Lucknow Marris College has been appointed and he joins on the first of July. The other vacancy has not yet been filled up. ✓ Santidev Ghose who has gone to Java on study leave has been given exceptional facilities for his training by the kind courtesy of the Ruling Chief of Surakarta. The following piece of news from the Calcutta Amrita Bazar Patrika from their special correspondent in Java will be of interest to many of our readers :—

"Sj. Santidev Ghose, of Santiniketan Music Department, is now staying at Java to study Javanese dance and music in all their aspects. To facilitate his studies, the Sultan of Java has introduced Sj. Ghose to the best

artists of Java and making the best out of this rare opportunity. Sj. Ghose is now studying Javanese male dance.

At a recent session of the World Women's Conference held at Java, Sj. Ghose was invited to demonstrate Tagore's songs besides a number of invitations from local institutions.

Java Radio authorities also invited Sj. Ghose to arrange a full fledged programme of Tagore's music to be relayed from Java Radio Station between 5 and 6-30 p. m. (S. T.). An Orchestra with Gamelon and Guitar has been formed in this connection.

Various articles on Indian music by Sj. Ghose are being translated into Dutch and published in the newspapers of Java. Sj. Ghose will be staying at Java till the last week of October."

...

We gratefully acknowledge a donation of Rupees 1,000 from His Highness the Maharajah of Mandi. Srijut P. R. Das, Barrister-at-law of Patna has promised a donation of Rs. 1,000 to the Kala-Bhavana for the furniture and fittings of the Havell Memorial Hall and the first instalment of the money has also been received. In this connection we should mention that this is not the first time that we have been favoured with a generous contribution from Sjt. Das. The Governments of Bombay and Orissa have sanctioned each a special grant of Rs. 500 to the Visva-Bharati this year.

The Calcutta University examination results are as follows : Matriculation—14 were sent up of whom 13 passed ; 8 in the First Division, 4 in the Second Division and 1 in the Third Division. Intermediate Arts and

(Continued on page 7)

## A Poem

Rabindranath Tagore

( Translated by Prof. Humayun Kabir, M. L. C., of the Calcutta University )

Marching with the waves of Life Eternal  
 We must go forward with Truth as our Polar Star  
 And no thought of death. The inclement, evil days  
 Will pour with rain upon our heads: Through it all  
 We must struggle on to keep on · Tryst with Him  
 At whose feet we poured the riches of our heart  
 From age to age.

Who is He ? We do not know and have not ever known.  
 But this alone we know that through the darkest night  
 It is to Him that men goes travelling on  
 Through storm and thunder throughout the ages long  
 Guarding with care the flame that burns in him.

Only this we know that he who had heard His call  
 Has gone forward with fearless heart,—in the whirl  
 Of danger he has poured his all, and endured  
 Torture with patient calm ; the voice of death  
 Has been music to his ears. He has faced the flames,  
 Suffered at the stake, and been hacked with sword,  
 But with unflinching heart has lit the sacred fire  
 And brought all dear belongings at the sacrifice,—

We have heard  
 That for Him the Prince has left his realm  
 And come out—a beggar in tattered rags.  
 Great hearts have endured from day to day  
 Pinpricks of daily life.

The honoured have placed their honour at His feet,  
 The rich their wealth, and heroes poured their lives.

We only know  
 That for the sake of this Universal Love  
 We must sacrifice all pettiness, discard  
 All indignity to life, and stand up with lifted head,—  
 Unwritten by fear and unmarked with slavery's badge.

## Rabindranath and the Asrama of Early Days

(Continued from the last issue )

By Kshitimohon Sen

The Poet's daily life was lived in the simplest style. He had only one servant, by name Umacharan. The master treated him with a degree of familiarity which the servant fully reciprocated. Umacharan had a keen sense of humour and fully appreciated his master's jokes. The Poet's treatment of his servants has always been characterised by his humanity and the servants have also repaid that kindness by loyalty and devotion. After Umacharan's death, his place was taken by a servant from Orissa, Sadhu. The look of set gravity on his face was such that it intimidated everybody. His master used to say, "Sadhu is so formidably grave that he might almost be taken for my guardian." When Sadhu retired after long and meritorious service, he was succeeded by his compatriot, Banamali, who is still in service. This simple and devoted soul, who has grown old in service, can claim to be associated with several of his master's poems. One day as he was bringing a glass of sherbet for his master he found the latter engaged in company. It was a late winter morning, presaging the advent of Spring. Banamali was wavering on the threshold, unable to decide if it was proper for him to disturb his master in company. His hesitation reminded the Poet of the sweet *madhavi* flower vacillating on the threshold of Spring, about to blossom and yet too shy to unfold its petals. He broke out in his famous song, *Why this hesitation, O shy madhavi ?\**

From a distance I had judged Rabindranath to be a poet only. After my coming here, however, I was amazed by the versatility of his genius. I found him to be as familiar with philology, the natural sciences, medicine, hygiene and nursing, as with poetry, music and art. Although there was in the asrama an old practising homeopath, the Poet was the real physician who prescribed. He had a large library of treatises on Homeopathy, of which he had made a thorough study. He had also given much time to the study of dietics. He was vehement in his condemnation of the waste of food-value due to bad cooking and love of spices in a country where the majority of people could hardly afford two meals a day. He once remarked: "We have to cross a stormy sea. The boat is old and worn-out, the load is heavy, and if we do not at least close up the cracks, we are done for." According to him a rational study of dietics should take into account both the taste and the nutritive value of the food stuff. His own taste, however, he has been able to train to almost anything. Once one Chintamani Shastri, who was working in the asrama, assured him that *neem* leaves were good for health. Forthwith *neem* leaves occupied the leading place in his daily menu. He always preferred to take vegetables uncooked, and has been a consistent patron of *gur* in place of sugar.

A secret of his success as an educational organiser has been his habit of always trusting others. He had as great a capacity

\* হে মাধবী শীঘ মাধবী বিদ্যা কেন ?

to follow as to lead, to obey as to command. He never tried to impose his opinions on others. Even the school children had their own tribunal for judging cases of indiscipline or misconduct. In such matters he respected and bound himself by the innate sense of justice and fairness which children invariably show. When he entrusted anybody with a particular commission, he gave him complete freedom within the scope of the task allotted. He knew the art of inspiring others to exert their utmost by the very act of his implicit confidence in their worth.

Although the Institution was growing rapidly, there was no office properly so-called and the funds were so meagre that when the need was felt for a clerk to assist the Rector, everybody was at his wit's end. The Poet declared that he would do the clerk's job as well; and, much to our embarrassment, he did function as such for a pretty long period, until prevailed upon with difficulty to delegate the work to one of us.

Absolute faith in the truth of his ideals has endowed him with infinite patience. There have come to the ashrama from time to time persons who have had very little in common with its ideals. Even in the face of reports reaching him of their incompatibility, he would not take any drastic steps, until he had given the person in question the utmost chance of proving his worth. On one such occasion, he told us: "It so happened once that complaints were carried to my father regarding some of my unorthodox views. My father met the complaints by remarking, 'Do not be afraid. He who is all Truth will bring him back to the correct path'. I have absolute faith in the education my father had given me and in the example of his own conduct."

His love and sympathy went out to everyone who was weak and helpless. At a time when our political wiseacres were disposed to ridicule the idea of rural reconstruction, he had the courage publicly to proclaim his faith that India cannot be truly free until its villages are restored to a basis of economic and moral self-respect. He has often had to suffer for his frankness. When during the days of the first non-co-operation movement it was being preached that the schools and colleges, being strongholds of alien culture, should be boycotted, it was he who registered his protest against exploiting the sentiments of young boys for political purposes. The amusing fact remains that those radicals who jeered at his *moderateness* are today advising the very same thing.

Once, many years ago, some non-Bengali friends complained to me that so great a principle as that of non-violence had escaped the Poet's spiritual vision. In reply I informed them that as early as 1909, long before the first Satyagraha movement was even talked of in India, the Poet had discussed and gauged the possibilities of the technique in his drama *Prayashchitta*, which was several times staged in the Ashrama. Dhananjoy Lairagi of the drama is presented there as a Satyagrahi of a very rigid description. I suggested to a Bengali knowing member of the party that he might satisfy himself by reading the drama, and undertook to procure a copy for him. As the book was not available in the market just then, I remember to have got a copy from Sj. Ramananda Chatterjee. The friend was highly enthusiastic over the drama and proposed to have it translated immediately in the different Indian languages. However, for reasons

best known to him, the proposal was never carried out.

Another trait that I have remarked in the character of the Poet is that, though intensely alive and sensitive to every shade of feeling, he rarely, if ever, gives way to excess of sentiment. His fortitude has been severely tested by tragic family bereavements,—of his children more have passed away than are left to him, and all in the prime of youth—but he has borne his losses with an equanimity and a calm that one associates with sages rather than with poets. This strength of soul he has derived from his assimilation of the spirit of the Upanishads. Early in life, he strove to emulate and imbibe that ideal according to which his father, the Maharshi, conducted his life and sadhana. Perhaps that is why he never felt drawn towards those unrestrained and extravagant forms of religious endeavour which inundated India after the era of the Upanishads. His ideal has always been that of the rishis of the ancient forest schools, whose actions and utterances were characterised by restraint and rhythm. His teachings reveal an exquisite blend of intellectual depth and artistic sensibility, in which eastern idealism and western rationalism correct each other, the whole permeated by a spirit of balance and rhythm which are so marked a feature of the prose of the Upanishads. In his ideas, as well as in his language, he has successfully combined the charm of unsophisticated simplicity which one associates with rural life, with all the refinements of urban culture. He has never encouraged a narrow nationalism to stand in the way of acquiring the best that the West has to teach us. Like a silk worm breaking

through the cocoon, he has cut through his own prejudices. In his poetic expression too he has evolved ever new forms, when the older ones have exhausted their possibilities. That is why there is such a rich variedness in his poetry and such a harmony

In his ideal of education, meditation and service, knowledge and practical application, go hand in hand. He has sought deliverance through love and service rather than through renunciation. The finite and the infinite are for him but two aspects of the same central reality. The static aspect of *Prakriti* and the dynamic aspect of *Purusha* have been discussed at length by Sankhya and the various systems of Indian philosophy. It was left to the Poet to delineate the pathos of *Purusha-Prakriti* relationship, which he conveyed through those beautiful poems, *Kach and Deljani* and *I will not let thee go*. In both these poems we see *Prakriti* vainly trying to bind *Purusha* in the meshes of *maya*. The tragedy of her recurrent failure constitutes the tragedy of the universe.

His ideal woman is neither an angel above men, nor a mere bed-mate. She is well defined in the character of Chitra and again in his poem, *At Night and in the Morning*. His love of human life and of this lovely and sad earth is beautifully brought out in the poem, *Farewell to Paradise*. In his *Baisnah Kabita* he has made God the sweetheart and sweetheart God.

So many-sided is Rabindranath's genius and so complex his personality that after thirty years of close contact I wonder how little I know him. I cannot envy the task of his future biographer. One thing, however, one can assert about him which is

witnessed by his every thought, utterance and act ; and that is, that, in the words of *Aitaraya Brahmana*, "his soul is like a song". All that is beautiful and harmonious he loves, and all that is cheap and ill-formed he shrinks from. I am reminded of an interesting anecdote, narrated to me by a relation of his who was also his close friend ; and with the anecdote I will close these reminiscences:

(Continued from page 2)

Science—27 were sent up and 22 passed. 8 in the First Division, 12 in the Second Division and 2 in the Third Division.

B. A.—23 were sent up of whom 16 passed. One ( Miss Harbhajan Kaur ) got Distinction and four secured Honours ( Miss Jayanti Pandey in Sanskrit , and Baldeo Singh, Sushil Kumar Kar Ray and Arun Kumar Banerji in English ).

Brisk admission is going on in all the Departments and already the Sree-Bhavana ( Girls' Hostel ) is absolutely full up. Several girl students have had to be refused admission owing to lack of seats. As usual we are getting our students from all over the

"When Rabikaka ( Uncle Rabindranath,) returned from Europe, I hit upon a device of robbing him of his foreign wardrobe. Accordingly I began singing his favourite songs in my atrociously unmusical voice. This being something he could never stand, he offered me his entire wardrobe as the price for my not singing."

country , a detailed statement of new admissions will be given in the next issue of the News.

...  
Miss Jayanti Pandey has been appointed an Assistant in the Sree-Bhavana to help the general management of this growing department. The Paridarshika Mlle. C. Bossennee who had gone home on leave is expected to join in the first week of August.

...  
Sisir Kumar Ghose who was till very recently a Government of Bengal Scholar in the Music Department has been appointed teacher of Music and Fine Arts in the Siksha-Charcha Bhavana at Sriniketan. He joins from the beginning of the new session



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# VISVA-BHARATI NEWS

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Volume VIII

AUGUST, 1939

Number II

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## A Message.

No rent is made there in the mist  
by the doubtful dawn.  
No struggling streak of light comes through  
to gild our cage of gloom.  
Yet do not wail with us in pity,  
bird whose wings are free,  
But soar above conspiring clouds  
and cry : I see the sun !

Rabindranath Tagore

## Santiniketan and Sriniketan

Gurudeva who had been staying at Sriniketan for some time past returned to Santiniketan on Monday, July 17. He is at present engaged in directing the rehearsals of "Dak-Ghar" ( Post-Office ) which is expected to be produced some time during this term. The Varsha-Mangal ( Rainy Season festival ) rehearsals are also going on under the direction of Adhyapaka Sailaja Ranjan Mazumdar.

The Calcutta University authorities have granted us recognition in B. A. Honours in Bengali with effect from July, 1939. It may be recalled here that it is only a few months that the University has raised Bengali to the status of an Honours subject and there are only two other Colleges in the University that have been declared competent to coach students in Honours Bengali. Professor Khagendranath Mitter inspected the Siksha-Bhavana on July 8 in connection with our application for affiliation in Bengali.

The following new appointments have been made at Santiniketan during this term :—

- ( 1 ) Sukhamay Chatterjee, M. A., ( Class I )  
B. T. ( Class I ) Adhyapaka in Bengali.
- ( 2 ) Pramathanath Nandi, M. sc. ( Class II )  
Adhyapaka in Botany.
- ( 3 ) Khagendranath Bhattacharya, M. A.  
( Class I ) Adhyapaka in Economics.
- ( 4 ) Vikramjit Hazrat, M. A. ( Class I )  
Adhyapaka in Persian & Urdu.

All these Adhyapakas will work both in the Siksha-Bhavana and the Patha-Bhavana.

We are very glad to welcome again in our midst Professor Tan-Yun-Shan who arrived here with his wife and children on July 25, from Chungking after a most arduous and risky journey of nearly ten weeks duration. He has brought with him to Rabindranath important letters from Marshall Chiang-Kai-Shi and other leaders of the Chinese people ; a letter from His Excellency Dr. Kung, the Chinese Finance Minister, is published elsewhere in this issue.

Two Chinese scholars—Messrs. Chow Ta-Fu & Chen-Shih have come with Prof. Tan and they have joined the Cheena-Bhavana as research workers. It is expected that Prof. Peon Hsin, a celebrated Chinese artist of the New School will also visit Santiniketan at an early date. Prof. Hsin will spend a full term here participating in the work of the Kala-Bhavana.

Two young Negro ladies, Miss Bush and Miss McCree have come to Santiniketan from U. S. A. for a stay of a couple of months to acquaint themselves with the work of this institution and also to form contacts with the student community of India. Both of them are University students and have been granted Travelling Fellowships under the Derrickota Foundation. After Dr. and Mrs Howard Thurman's visit to India in 1936, ( it will be recalled that

( Continued on page 18 )

## A Letter From China.

( Following is an English translation of a letter to Rabindranath Tagore from Dr. H. H. Kung, President of the Executive Yuan and Minister of Finance, Chinese National Government. )

Respected Sir,

I take the opportunity to ask Prof. Tan-Yun-Shan, who is shortly returning to India, to convey to you my deepest regards and heartfelt gratitude.

Your noble voice vindicating peace and justice and your valued message to my people have both given us no end of courage and inspiration.

Our people in China have the same instinctive regard for peace and equity as you have in India. It would, therefore, be easy for you to imagine the amount of provocation that has compelled us today to take recourse to armed resistance against the militarist aggression of Japan.

The inhuman brutalities of the Japanese soldiers beggar all description. Not only have they violated the territorial integrity of China and encroached upon the rights and freedom of the Chinese, they have also, at the very same time, imperilled the sublime culture of the East, betrayed the great spirit

of Asia and menaced the peace and security of the whole world. Realising as we do our full responsibility to our own race as well as to the world, we will not lay down our arms till the last of the ruthless aggressors has been driven out of China.

It is true that the Japanese have succeeded in occupying several of our big towns and cities. But contrary to their expectations, our desire and strength to fight back have also increased in equal proportion. And now we are confident that the ultimate victory will be ours.

No two countries in the world have been so intimately connected to each other as India and China. Their cultural bond is as strong today as it was in the past. Much of this revival in our cultural relationship is due to your laudable guidance and noble effort. We fully realise and admire the sincerity of your friendship for us in our hour of trial. Let me assure you of our earnest desire to co-operate with you in your endeavours to promote the culture of the Orient.

Praying for your health and happiness,

I remain, with respects,

Yours sincerely,

H. H. Kung.

## Alumni News

Chandidas Banerjee who passed the I.Sc. examination this year from the Siksha-Bhavana has been granted a Scholarship of Rs. 40 a month by the Behar Government to prosecute studies in Agriculture at the Agricultural College in Cawnpore.

Kusum Sreecastaba who passed the Matriculation examination from the Patha-Bhavana has been awarded a scholarship of Rs. 30 a month also by the Behar Government, for medical education in the Darbhanga Medical School.

## Rural Reconstruction Work at Sriniketan

Rabindranath Tagore

( The following is a free translation of a talk given by Gurudeva to the workers of Sriniketan at an informal discussion on July 14. )

As a young man, I was deputed to manage the affairs of our extensive family estate. Thus at an early age I had the opportunity of coming into direct and intimate contact with the rural life of Bengal. Born and brought up in an urban atmosphere, I naturally disliked the idea of spending my days in remote villages. My poetic disposition vehemently protested against the thought of ledger-keeping. But once I had taken up the work I tried to put in my level best with the result that after some time I evolved my own system of management which showed highly satisfactory results. I broke away practically from all the conventional methods of Zemindari work and put more emphasis on personal contact with the ryots rather than on mere profit earning. Gradually I took to the lap of rural Bengal, even as a duck takes to water, and, what is more, began to find real joy in the work allotted to me.

As my attachment to the villages became closer I began to discover the crucial problems of rural Bengal. During my frequent sojourns to and from Shilaidha I came face to face with the poverty and squalor of the villagers' life. Their misery and helplessness became as plain to me as their ignorance and narrow selfish outlook. They seemed to belong to a demoralized race whose self-respect has been abused and initiative taken away. For every move in improving their social, financial and hygienic condition the villagers entirely depended upon the landlords. So long as the gentry continued to

live in villages all was well. But as soon as they left the villages to find for themselves luxuries of town-life, the seamy side of the social fabric began to show up.

My first experiences to come to the help of the villagers were anything but pleasant. I encountered indifference and sometimes active opposition from those whom I wanted to serve. But I did not lose heart, for, I knew that what I offered them in a spirit of humble dedication could not but be accepted for all it was worth, some time or other.

Remember that the very first condition of social service is that love should provide the motive impulse. I may assure you that the villagers have nothing but contempt for those half baked philanthropists whose services smack of lofty condescension. But I should also add that love alone can achieve but little unless it is fortified by strenuous preparation based upon a close study of the many problems of village life. Nothing can be more harmful than ignorant service. You have now heard what I consider essential factors of an enduring piece of good social work. Those are love as well as understanding and the two are mutually dependent. That is why my son Rathindranath and the late Santosh Majumdar were sent abroad by me to study the science of agriculture and dairy-farming before I could seriously think of taking up rural reconstruction work.

I believe you all know what an arid tract of land Sriniketan was when our work

began. Nobody could dream of the enormous achievements which we associate with the institute to-day. In that connection I can hardly forget mentioning the generous service of our friend Mr. Elmhirst due to whose patient endeavour Sriniketan has already become a necessary complement to Santiniketan.

Lastly I would like to tell you that I consider it fortunate on our part to be able

to work on a small scale. Our limited resources are in a way our true asset. For, it is better for that we hold out to the rest of India an example of model villages—however small their number may be—than fritter away our energy for the sake of mere magnitude. In a modest scale a cluster of villages may very well represent India, and, remember please, it is in her villages that India is truly represented.

(Continued from page 10)

they spent a few days here at Santiniketan and delivered a series of lectures on Negro culture and problems ) the Foundation was created to provide passage to India, bi-annually for Negro women students who would be attached to some important College or University for a period of four to six months during which time they would live the life of students at the University and attend lectures, specially those having a direct bearing upon Indian culture and situation.

In this connection, Prof. Thurman in his letter to Rabindranath writes as follows: —

We remember the conversation that we had with your Secretary, Mr. Chanda, when we were there, regarding the possibility of American Negroes establishing at Santiniketan, a little house which would be financed by the American Negroes, known as the "Home of Negro Culture in India" to contain books written by Negroes, paintings, sculpture, handicrafts etc. While the young women are on your campus, will you kindly discuss with them whether you would be interested in having this proposed plan realised ?"

Needless to say we would heartily welcome the foundation of a Negro Home at Santiniketan and correspondence is being carried on with Prof. Thurman in the matter.

There have been 73 new admissions in the Siksha-Bhavana this year, of whom 20 are women. Between them they practically cover the whole of India ; 50 are from Bengal, 2 from Behar, 3 from U. P., 5 from the Punjab, 1 from Bombay, 3 from Sind, 1 from Java, 7 from Hyderabad (Deccan) and 1 from Assam. Further admission has been stopped for want of accommodation.

The number of new admissions in the Kala-Bhavana is 21 ; of them 12 are women.

Dr. Satyaban Roy, F. R. C. S. (Edin.) of Calcutta, a Life Member of the Visva-Bharati, has kindly agreed to pay for a monthly scholarship of Rs. 10, for two years, for a poor but deserving student in the Siksha-Bhavana. Bhaktapada Mandal of the First Year Arts Class has been awarded the scholarship this term.

...



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Soetana Har.

## E. B. Havell.

Abanindranath Tagore.

"Earth's treasures are for heroes,"—is a saying which finds an illustration in the life of a person like the late Mr. Havell.

It would be hardly correct to regard him merely as a champion of Indian art or a scholar. For the loving eyes with which he looked upon the Muse of Indian art were the eyes of a devotee rather than those of a scholar and interpreter.

If today in India we can distinguish true art from false, it is due to the foundations laid by Mr. Havell, at any rate, so far as I can do so, I owe it to him.

It is a long time now that I have missed him as my companion ; maybe, it will be a long time yet that I must spend without him.

While he lived he commanded my respect, now that he is dead, I feel grateful to be called upon to pay homage to his memory.

English translation ( by Hiran Kumar Sanyal ) of the message sent by Dr. Abanindranath Tagore at the opening ceremony of the Havell Memorial Hall at Santiniketan

## In Memoriam

We deeply mourn the death of Sj. Dharani K. Bose who met with a fatal accident in Sylhet on July 5th when travelling in a motor bus from Shillong to Silchar. Sjt Bose who was one of the earlier batch of students in the Santiniketan Brahmacharyasram had a great reputation as a successful architect in Calcutta where he set up independent practice after a course of training in an English University. At the time of death, he was also an elected Councillor in the Corporation of Calcutta. Ever since his student days, he had maintained close contact with his alma mater and was helping the Institution as a Consulting Engineer in an honorary capacity.

To the members of the bereaved family we offer our heart-felt sympathies.

...

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# VISVA-BHARATI NEWS

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Volume VIII

SEPTEMBER, 1939

Number III

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## A Poem

The sun shines, the rain pours down in showers,  
The leaves glisten in the bamboo grove,  
The smell of the newly-tilled earth fills the air ;  
Our hands are strong, and our hearts glad,  
As we toil from morning till night to plough the land.

The spirit of a youthful poet dances in swaying cadence  
Along the meadows, writing its poem of green lines,  
Stirs of thrill ripple through the ripening rice field,  
The Earth's heart is joyous in the sunny October hours,  
in the cloudless nights of the full moon,  
As we toil from morning till night to plough the land.

*Rabindranath Tagore*

\* English translation by Prof. Arthur Geddes of the Srimiketan anthem.

## Santiniketan and Sriniketan.

✓ Rabindranath left for Calcutta, on August 18, to fulfil a long standing engagement,—to lay the foundation stone of the "Mahajati Sadan," which is to be the future headquarters of the Provincial Congress in Bengal. The function took place on the 19th in the presence of a vast and distinguished gathering. Thanks to the excellent arrangements made by the Congress authorities under the direct supervision of Sjt. Subhas Chandra Bose, though the crowd was immense, Gurudeva bore the strain well.

An English translation of the address that he delivered on the occasion will be found elsewhere in this issue of the News.

✓ The next evening there was a musical soiree in the Vichitra Hall under the auspices of the Visva-Bharati Sammelani. It was largely attended by the members of the Visva-Bharati in Calcutta and the accidental presence of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru added to the importance of the event. The Pandit was on his way to China and he found time in the midst of his many engagements to come and pay his respects to the Poet during the brief while that he was in Calcutta. In his "A Diary of a Travel" Panditji writes as follows:—

"I learnt that Poet Rabindra Nath Tagore was in Calcutta. That was too good an opportunity to miss as it is always a delight to meet Gurudev. I hastened to his house from my hotel and for all too brief a time, he spoke to me of the intermingling of the great Asiatic cultures and why it was necessary that India should develop contacts with eastern countries. He was pleased that I

was going to China and pressed me to go to Japan also, more especially to tell them not to lose their soul in their present adventure in China. He was anxious that we should make our position towards Japan clear. While we were entirely opposed to their militarism and imperialism and the horrors they had perpetrated in China, we had no ill-will towards the Japanese. We wanted to make friends with them but not on this false basis. While China was suffering terribly, Japan would probably suffer greater and more permanent injury of soul by her brutal imperialism. Gurudeva wanted me to go to Japan to say all this—a large order under existing circumstances.

"I assured him that I would very much like to go to Japan; I had long wanted to do so. But this seemed hardly possible now as it would take far too much time. I could cross from nationalist China to the Japanese-controlled areas over the various frontiers. I would have to come back to Hongkong and then go by sea or air direct to Japan. This meant a much longer absence from India than I had bargained for. Besides, I had no illusions about my capacity to convert the Japanese Government to peaceful and democratic ways; indeed even an approach was not possible then."

Gurudeva had written a letter to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru a few days previously as soon as he came to know that the Pandit was proceeding to China to convey the message of sympathy from the Indian people and the National Congress to the great Chinese Nation in their heroic struggle

(Continued on page 22)

## An Address\*

Rabindranath Tagore

Bengal led India in welcoming European culture to her heart, living currents flowed from overseas stirring her with new freedom. From age-long hibernation, Bengal's intellectual mind awoke to full splendour. Mighty-souled Indians like Ram Mohun Roy had sudden access to a wide range of rational imagination, frontiers vanished from their vision in a background of universal humanity. Bengal launched India's crusade against custom, religious sectarianism, and political serfdom. Bengali language gathered new momentum, its stiffness was dispelled by youthful vigour, literature came laden with unprecedented hope, sheltering and nourishing life like islands uprisen from primeval ocean's depth. Painting in Bengal burst the bonds of alien imitation; striving for the genius of India's art, it defied the savage attack of mimic-mongers. Music again, in Bengal, released itself from the coils of blind traditions, and even if final judgment cannot be delivered on her creative experiments, her path of self-expression, in spite of pedant's verdicts, has been opened. Bengal's individuality is being revealed in her songs.

Where life's call is vital, living centres must respond: Bengal did so even though the call of the new Age came from distant shores. In that lies Bengal's pride, and her true identity. India's first home for cultivation of national freedom was in this province; in those critical days again, when our leaders were banished behind jail-bars it

was our youth in Bengal who led unhesitatingly in flinging themselves in the face of dire calamity. No other part of India can claim a parallel to this. Not that we are judging such events in the light of results, or by the standard of permanent beneficence—but we must give full value to intolerable suffering, to dauntless sacrifice for the sake of freedom. Hundreds of youthful lives in Bengal have burnt themselves out during long terms of imprisonment; Bengal's lights are dim, we know, for this reason; and yet we know that the soil in which they were born will give birth again to heroic sons who will not waste their manhood in destructive work but harness it to national reconstruction.

To day in this great Hall of India we shall lay the foundation of Bengal's prowess, but our strength will not lie in arrogant nationalism, suspicious of friend and foe. We shall invoke Bengal's magnanimous heart of hospitality in which our humanity has found liberation; we shall seek freedom in manysided co-operation. Valour and beauty, resolute work and creative imagination, devotion to truth as well as self-dedication in public service—may these unite in benediction to our land. Noble memories of the past would mingle with great hopes for the future, heightening our power of action. Bengal's greatness, carrying her to a new sunrise, will be augmented by propitious circumstance and stirred to triumphant ardour by adversity; she will spread the urge

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\* English translation of the address delivered at the laying of the foundation ceremony of the Mahajati Sadan in Calcutta on 19.8.39.

( Continued from page 18 )

against Japanese aggression. The letter will be found elsewhere in this issue.

Gurudeva returned from Calcutta on August 21.

...

✓ The annual Vriksha-Ropan Ceremony ( Tree-planting Ceremony ) took place this year in the compound of the Cheena-Bhavana on August 13 in the morning. After the usual chanting of appropriate Vedic mantras, Gurudeva addressed a few words explaining the significance of the ceremony. He said, "Our Asrama bids welcome to one and all. Our call travels to the farthest parts of the world inviting sympathetic souls to participate in our work and accept our hospitality. Not to the world of man alone but to the world of nature as well, we send our warmest greetings. On this auspicious occasion we extend our welcome to the trees and plants, invoking at the same time the Sun and the Wind and Rain to shower benediction upon them "

An interesting feature of this year's ceremony was the planting of a sapling from the famous Bodhi tree of Gaya which was brought here by the Hungarian artists, Mrs. and Miss Brunner.

The Rajah Saheb of Awagarh arrived here on August 4, and after a short stay of nearly a fortnight left for his estate. The Rajah Saheb who is a great patron and friend of ours, has again placed a princely donation in the hands of Gurudeva for the work of the Visva-Bharati. Many much-needed extensions in our buildings will now be possible thanks to this gift. New dormitories will be built for the Patha-Bhavana,

Sangit-Bhavana, Sree-Bhavana and there will be additions and alterations in the Kala-Bhavana and the Kitchen. A fund is also being created out of this donation for the Library and the Sangit-Bhavana.

We offer our heartfelt gratitude to the Rajah Saheb for his act of generosity.

/ The Varsha-Mangal festival was solemnised at Santiniketan in the evening of August 27. Rabindranath had recently composed a number of songs for the occasion which were exquisitely rendered by the students under the direction of Adhyapaka Sailaja Ranjan Mazumdar.

/ The annual Hala-Karshan ceremony took place at Sriniketan on the 29th of August in the presence of Rabindranath and the inmates of both of the institutes. We observed a holiday on the occasion.

/ Our Vice-President, C. F. Andrews has been requested by the Indian community in South Africa to go there to advise them in view of the contemplated drastic regulations of the Union Government against the Asiatics. In spite of his indifferent health, he has decided to leave towards the beginning of September for South Africa but he hopes to be able to return in time for the Pous festival here in the third week of December. At the moment he is staying at Christukula Asrama at Tirupattur.

• We are grateful to Sjt. P. R. Das of Patna who has presented three famous pictures from his personal collection to the Kala-Bhavan Museum. Abanindranath's "Aurangzeb" and Nandalal Bose's "Penance of Uma" are generally admitted to be the

two best specimens of modern art in India and we congratulate ourselves on having the good fortune of possessing them in our collection.

...

### Alumni News

We congratulate Dr Amulya Chandra Sen, M.A., Ph.D. who has been recently

appointed the Station Director of the New Broadcasting Station, soon to be opened in Dacca. Dr. Sen was attached to the Vidya-Bhavana for a few years as a research scholar and has only recently returned from Europe where he had worked in the Hamburg and Prague Universities.

..

### In Memoriam

We record with deep regret the death of Harishankar Agarwal on August 30, as the result of a drowning accident in the swimming tank.

Harishankar was a second year student in the Visva-Bharati course. He took keen interest in literature, and his own original work showed great promise. During the year he was with us at Santiniketan he had thrown himself into his work with the devotion of an enthusiast, and has left behind a remarkable collection of papers.

At the same time he was no recluse. His sensitive nature was as alive to human affection as to the message of natural beauty, and those to whom he gave his friendship know that his death has left a real void in their lives. And not only his more intimate friends, but other fellow students and staff will miss his unfailing courtesy, and will mourn the cutting short of a life so rich in possibilities.

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OF  
Poet Rabindranath Tagore's Works.**



The copyright of the Bengali works of Rabindranath Tagore and their translations in Hindi belongs to Visva-Bharati and the authorities of the Visva-Bharati have purchased the stock in hand of all Hindi translations of Rabindranath Tagore's works from the Prabasi Office which was authorised by the author to publish Hindi translations. The Hindi works are now being printed and published by the Publishing Department of the Visva-Bharati and will be available at the Visva-Bharati Book-Shop, 210, Cornwallis Street, Calcutta.

The Publishing Department of the Visva-Bharati has also arranged for publication of a series of authorised translations of the Poet's works in Hindi from original Bengali.

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# VISVA-BHARATI NEWS

Volume VIII

OCTOBER, 1939

Number IV

## A Poem

Through the troubled history of man  
comes sweeping a blind fury of destruction  
and the towers of civilisation topple down to dust.  
In the chaos of moral nihilism  
are trampled underfoot by marauders  
the best treasures of Man heroically won  
by the martyrs for ages.  
Come young nations proclaim the fight for freedom,  
raise up the banner of invincible faith.  
Build bridges with your life across the gaping earth  
blasted by hatred,  
and march forward.  
Do not submit yourself to carry the burden of insult  
upon your head,  
kicked by terror  
and dig not a trench with falsehood and cunning  
to build a shelter for your dishonoured manhood ;  
offer not the weak as sacrifice to the strong  
to save yourself.

Rabindranath Tagore

This Poem was broadcasted from the Ottawa Radio Station, Canada, in the Empire Day Programme on May 29, 1939.

## Santiniketan and Sriniketan.

Gurudeva who had not been keeping very well left for Calcutta enroute to Mungpu on September 6. He stayed in Calcutta for a few days and arrived in Mungpu on September 12 where he has been staying since then. He is expected to return towards the end of October.

Adhyaksha Nandalal Bose has been commissioned by the Government of Baroda to execute a few frescoes on the walls of the Royal Mausoleum—the Kirti-Mandir—in the State. He will leave for Baroda in the first week of October accompanied by a few senior students of the Kala-Bhavana and Adhyapaka Benode Behari Mukherjee who will assist him in the work. The party will return in November with the re opening after the Pujah holidays.

We are very glad to welcome back into our midst Dr. Jitendranath Chakravarty, our Senior Medical Officer who arrived home after an adventuresome journey by the land-route from Europe. He was in Austria on the eve of the war and but for a timely and friendly warning from the British Consul in Vienna, he would have been caught in the maelstrom of the war. He left the German territories practically at the last moment and when he was in Constantinople war was finally declared between England and Germany.

Dr. Chakravarty, who left for England at the beginning of this year took an advanced course in eye-surgery in London and spent some time in visiting famous hospitals in Berlin and Vienna. On his way back, he took the opportunity of studying the details of the rural sanitation work in Yugoslavia.

He has already resumed work at Sriniketan.

...

Monimohon Mukherji, B. A., B. Sc., has been appointed Adhyapaka in Geography in the Patha-Bhavana and joined towards the beginning of September. Two other new and interesting appointments are to be made soon after the Pujah holidays,—breaking new ground. The authorities have sanctioned us a Sports Director and a General Manager of the Kitchen. The need of a properly qualified Sports teacher has long been keenly felt but our limited resources never permitted us the benefit of proper coaching in games and sports for our students. The kitchen too, serving as it does a few hundred meals a day, requires special attention today and the Manager will be not appointed a day too soon. His chief worry will however be to devise every day twice for nine months in the year a tasty healthy meal for palates so different as Tamil and Pathan.

The kitchen building also will be extended and thoroughly renovated during the summer holidays out of the Awagarh grant.

...

It was with a heavy heart that we parted from our friend and colleague Dr. A. Aronson of the Siksha-Bhavana, who being a German subject was taken into Police custody as an enemy subject on the outbreak of hostilities with Germany. He has been lodged in the Fort in Calcutta from which we have received a few letters from him.

Though technically a German subject, Dr. Aronson, being of Jewish faith has really

(Continued on page 81)

## What has this war to do with us ?

( Marjorie Sykes )

Just one month has passed since that Sunday evening when after days of uncertainty and alternating hope and gloom, the news flashed across the world that Great Britain and France were at war with Germany. The uneasy fears and suspicions of Europe, miscalled "peace", have given place to that major war that had seemed for months to grow more unavoidable. The die is cast, India is technically at war with Germany,—yet what concern is it of ours ? As we sat that evening watching the pageantry of sunset across our wide horizons, the tragedy of Europe seemed a distant, unreal dream, a tale from another world—"of old unhappy far-off things and battles long ago" and with no closer connection with our own lives than any other mediaeval romance. The reality, surely, lies around us, in our sheltered lives of study and amusement, in the peace and beauty of our country surroundings. "War news" by wireless and newspaper adds spice to our conversation, and provides intriguing topics for debate with our friends—but no more.

Such a reaction is entirely understandable and the mood is natural. But if we are thinking people, it cannot represent our final attitude. War on the modern scale anywhere in the world is a vital concern of all who believe in the value of the civilised and constructive life : a war entered into by the British Empire to which we are linked, concerns every thinking Indian, as Jawahar-

lal Nehru has so forcibly made clear. It cannot but be a concern of Santiniketan, where, "free from all antagonisms of race, nationality, creed or caste", we seek "to strengthen the fundamental conditions of world peace". \* It is not so much that the material security of our lives may be disturbed, though that is possible. It is far more that war represents the sharpest challenge to the ideals of co-operation and cultural enrichment on which this Ashram has been built. How then may we at Santiniketan meet this challenge ? On what lines may we set ourselves to think and work, as individuals or in groups, so that the heritage of our civilisation may in spite of the bestial destructiveness of war, be preserved and strengthened ? This paper will try to suggest some answers to these questions.

First, there are certain attitudes of mind, encouraged by war propaganda and newspaper stunts, which spring up in us all too easily, and which a little consideration will show us to be false and ignoble. One is the temptation to gloat over "crisis" news, the pleasurable excitement with which we repeat to each other the latest example of callous policy or of combatant "frightfulness". We do not consider or remember what these things mean in terms of human suffering ; we do not imagine how we should feel if those distant victims, who are nothing more to us than anonymous numbers, were our own

relatives and friends, or even if we were eyewitnesses of the horror that has overtaken them. If we let ourselves grow accustomed to, listen to and read news of such stupendous barbarities—given as it usually is in coldly impersonal terms—with-out training our minds to read between the lines and *realise* its meaning for individual human beings, our powers of sympathy will be dulled, and a callousness will creep into our thought of others which will bode ill for the future of our own civilisation. Mr. Middleton Murry, the distinguished English scholar and philosopher, recently stated that he had found it necessary to give up listening to the wireless for this very reason—because of the fearful numbing of human sensibility which its thoughtless use produced. His action should warn everyone of us to beware of how we expose our minds to poison.

We are probably more alive to, and therefore less likely to be led astray by the other temptation of war-time thought—that of blackening the “enemy” and refusing to remember that the same number of innocent and peace loving people will be involved on his side as on “ours”. When all allowances for propaganda have been made, it is still a welcome feature of this war that it has begun with no rancour against Germans as such, and a disposition to distinguish between the German people and their system of Government. But in spite of this, the hardships of a long war may easily promote a blinder bitterness, and it has already been necessary for a correspondent to write a protest to the papers about the indiscriminate “boozing” of things German in the Calcutta cinemas. Let us remember now that the only chance of a “just peace” is that

the common man who moulds public opinion in all countries (that is, ourselves) should keep his mind free from the blind passion for revenge which ruined the Versailles treaty and vitiated the conduct of the Allies towards Germany for years afterwards.

An Indian may well ask, however, what possible influence Indian public opinion, however enlightened, could have on the settlement of a war in which we have so little political concern. A really enlightened and awakened India, ready to exert all the power of non-violent non-co-operation against Government which refused, say, to consider the relinquishment of some portions of absolute national sovereignty in favour of a super-national “Federation of the World”, an India fighting not only for herself but for civilisation, would, I believe, have a tremendous influence. But perhaps that is an impossible dream. What is possible is that every public man in India should use all his power in support of the Congress request to the British Government to declare its war aims in clear and concrete terms, that we may weigh and judge them; and to take steps to give India such effective freedom as will enable her freely to endorse those aims if she finds them worthy.

And what of the student? Particularly what of the Santiniketan student who cares for the ancient Indian ideals and values upon which this Ashram was founded? It seems to me that the war challenges him (or her) to act in two ways, different but complementary; and that in taking up the challenge he will be making a real contribution, however small it may seem, to peace and humanity.

Firstly, because he is a student, and has the responsibilities of that privileged posi-

tion, he should endeavour to make, alone or preferably in a group, a serious study of the essential conditions of freedom and international peace. Such study will not be easy ; it will involve getting at the relevant historical and economic facts, and the weighing up of the existing plans of advance ; it will involve hard work. But without it there can be no leadership, no vision, and "without vision the people perish." The students of the present are the leaders of the future, and they must be equipped—not with the external label of a B. A., but with the real knowledge which is the fruit of steady, purposeful study and the foundation of permanent advance. Will our Santiniketan students be aroused by the war to devote their brains to the solution of the problems of peace ? They are world problems and therefore our problems, for India is part of the world.

Secondly, because the Santiniketan student is an Indian, and inherits here much of what is best in the Indian culture of beautiful and contented simplicity, a great war, the product of material greed and national selfishness on both sides, should drive him to examine afresh the foundations of modern Indian society, and see whether the seeds of war are not to be found here also. Are we too in danger of becoming an "acquisitive society" rather than a co-operative society whose highest ideal was renunciation ? The danger is certainly there, and the shock of war at our doors ought to enable us to see more clearly the

extent of its possible ravages. How are we to meet it ? Gandhiji has devoted his life to the message that true freedom is in self-control, service and simplicity. Modern India calls aloud for service to be given in that spirit. In hundreds of thousands of villages there are children needing education for freedom and self-reliance—the type of education that can only be given by sympathetic teachers imbued with the spirit, if not the letter, of the Wardha scheme. There are endless possibilities of service in health and hygiene and every aspect of social life—but they are possibilities only open to those who refuse to be disengaged by difficulties because they know what they are working for—a nation of men and women ready for all the responsibilities of freedom, a nation whose instincts will be sound and which can therefore make a real contribution to world peace. The concrete embodiment of such a purpose may be unromantic in the extreme—an evening school in a dirty slum, the endless petty struggle with village apathy and laissez-faire—but when it is done with purpose and intelligence, I know of no more permanently constructive work. If the war should come nearer to our own doors we shall all hear a great deal more about National Service ; for peace-workers in England the call to National Service for war purpose has been a challenge to renewed devotion to national services of a less spectacular but more truly constructive kind. For us the challenge of war should be the same.



---

Prithvis Neogy.

## A Tribute To Mahatma Gandhi

Rabindranath Tagore.

Occasionally there appear in the arena of politics, makers of history, whose mental height is above the common level of humanity. They wield an instrument of power, which is almost physical in its compelling force and often relentless, exploiting the weakness in human nature—its greed, fear, or vanity. When Mahatma Gandhi came and opened up the path of freedom for India, he had no obvious medium of power in his hand, no overwhelming authority of coercion. The influence which emanated from his personality was ineffable, like music, like beauty. Its claim upon others was great because of its revelation of a spontaneous self-giving. This is the reason why our

(Continued from page 26)

never given his allegiance to Nazi Germany and he left his country with the advent of Hitler to power. His parents also left Germany and are now settled in Palestine where they have secured British nationality. In one of his letters Dr. Aronson writes :

"My position here is preposterous and unbearable. I have suffered so many humiliations at the hands of the German Nazis and yet I am detained with a whole crowd of them. I have lost my German citizenship years ago and yet I am here . . . . I am grateful to the officers of this Camp who make the best of a bad job. But this is obviously not my place in India. It is for the first time since seven years that I've to live in intimate contact with Germans. This is more than what any civilized person would bear."

It is a pity that for some technical legal reasons such a man should be put into

people have hardly ever laid emphasis upon his natural cleverness in manipulating recalcitrant facts. They have rather dwelt upon the truth which shines through his character in lucid simplicity. This is why, though his realm of activity lies in practical polities, peoples' minds have been struck by the analogy of his character with that of the great masters, whose spiritual inspiration comprehends and yet transcends all varied manifestations of humanity, and makes the face of worldliness turn to the light that comes from the eternal source of wisdom.

(From the Commemoration volume edited by Sir S. Radhakrishnan in celebration of Mahatma Gandhi's 70th birthday.)

prison. His case is however being investigated and we have every reason to hope that he will be released as soon as the Committee appointed by the India Government for the purpose has scrutinised the details of his case. . . .

The Santiniketan Sachiva has been informed by the Government of Orissa that they have decided to send here a post-graduate Oriya Scholar to carry on research work in some branch of Indology under the auspices of the Vidya-Bhawanu. The scholar is due to join after the Puja holidays.

Kishorimohan Santra has joined the General Office at Santiniketan on deputation for six months with effect from October 1. During his absence from Calcutta, Pulin Behari Sen, M. A. will act as the Assistant Secretary to the Publishing Department in Calcutta in an honorary capacity.

. . .

## RABINDRA RACHANAVALI

( Complete Collected Bengali Works of Rabindranath Tagore )

The Visva-Bharati Publishing Department has arranged for the editing and publication of a complete collection of the Bengali writings of Rabindranath. It is expected the Edition will be completed in about 25 volumes ; four or five volumes to be published in a year. The books will be illustrated with topical photographs, tables, etc.

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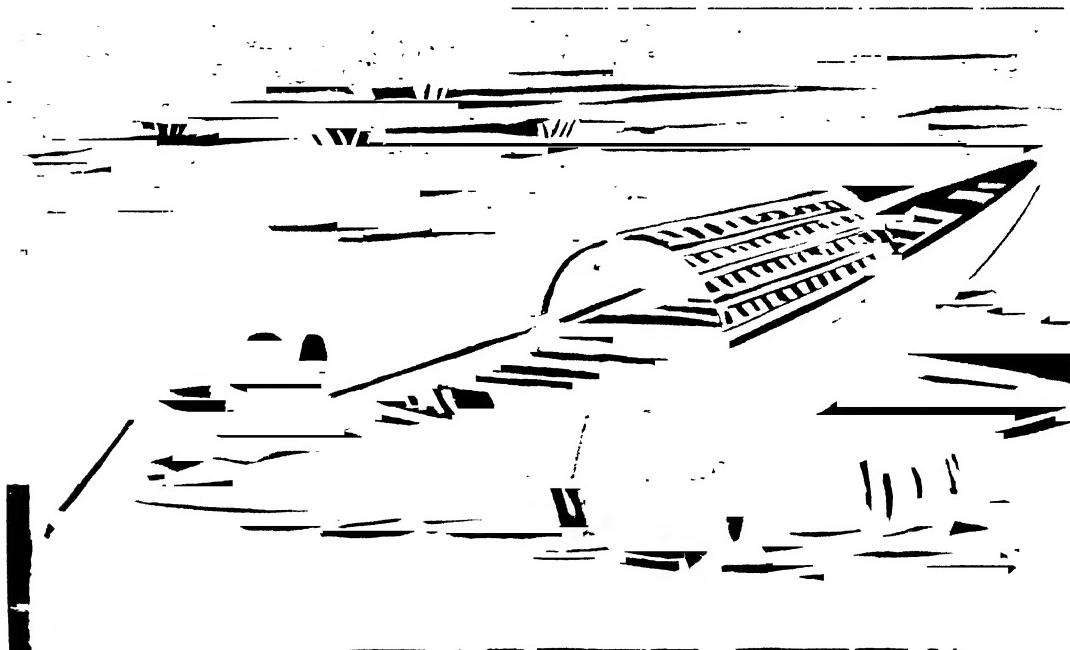
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# VISVA-BHARATI NEWS

Volume VII

NOVEMBER, 1939

Number V



By Anil Saha.

## Santiniketan and Sriniketan.

Since September 12 Gurudeva has been staying in Mangpu. On the whole, the rest has done him good. He is expected to return towards the beginning of this month.

...

The coming of the Autumn holidays has been traditionally associated in the Asrama with fun and festivities. We were true to custom this year as in the last. After a brief lapse of two years Ananda Mela was held this time and everybody was happy at the revival of so pleasant a function.

The institution re-opens on November 18.

...

October 2 was observed as a holiday on the occasion of the birthday anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. A special service was held at Sinha Sadan when Pandit Kshitmohon Sen praying for Mahatmaji's long life described him as an ideal *Karmayogin* whose signal contribution to India's *sadhana* was based on the principles of truth and non-violence.

In the afternoon of the same day a meeting was held with Prof. Tan Yun-Shan presiding. Speeches were made touching upon the many-sided activities of Gandhiji.

A message of love and respect was sent to him by the Sachiva on behalf of the inmates of the Asrama.

...

We are very glad to welcome back into our midst Santideva Ghosh who arrived home on October 25.

Some anxiety was felt for him as news reached us of his lying ill in the Civil Hospital at Singapore. He was, however, discharged after a week's treatment. Though

the trouble persists he is feeling much better at present.

Thanks to the valuable help given him by the Sultans of Surakarta and Jogjakarta his stay in the Institute of Taman Siswa has been one of pleasure as well as of profit. He has extensively travelled in the interiors during his six months' leave and has been able to make a close and intimate study of the dance and music of the two islands of Bali and Java.

We hope that the experiences he has gathered will prove to be a valuable asset to the Sangithbhavana, especially with regard to dance and dance accompaniment.

...

Our soccer eleven has once more proved its excellence and has thus kept up a long-cherished tradition. This season we have lost only one out of the seven matches we played with visiting teams. Three ended in draw and the rest found us winners.

Our triumphs at home encouraged us to venture abroad and accordingly we sent out a team under Dr. D. M. Sen on a week's tour. We are glad our expectations were not belied. Our boys played in course of six days an equal number of matches and, despite the strain, won an all-round triumph at the cost of a single game.

Patna, Benares and Agra were the three places included in their itinerary. They were made welcome everywhere. The tour has proved so much of a success that we are considering if it could be made an annual feature.

...

(Continued on page 88.)

## Early Days at Santiniketan

Rathindranath Tagore

My earliest recollection of Santiniketan Asrama goes back to my childhood when I was only nine years of age. About this time my cousin, Balendranath, had got enthusiastic over the idea of forming an all-India Theistic Society by the fusion of the three Brahmo Samajes of Bengal, the Arya Samaj of the Punjab and the Prarthana Samaj of Bombay. He had just then returned home after a tour in which he met the leaders of these religious societies and discussed with them the possibility of an amalgamation. Being an unpractical idealist and underrating the doctrinaire mentality of his friends he came back full of hope and proposed to my grandfather that a conference of all Theists be called at Santiniketan. The Maharshi immediately sent for Pandit Shivadhan Vidyarnava of the Adi Samaj, who had been teaching me the rudiments of Sanskrit, and ordered him that within three months I should be prepared for the Upanayana ceremony which was to take place at Santiniketan. This will serve as the occasion for inviting not only the Theists but all well-known Vedic pundits from every province in India. At the end of three months I was to be examined by Maharshi himself to see that I could recite correctly and with proper intonation the selection from the Upanishads, called "Brahmo dharma." My teacher, who had no delusions regarding his pupil trembled at the herculean task imposed on him. However, Maharshi's word was law, and the teacher and the pupil set to work with such grim determination that at the end of the prescribed period

my grandfather was greatly pleased to hear me recite the mantras so dear to him. Much to my chagrin the reward, a fat cheque, went to my teacher.

The invitations were now issued and I was taken to Santiniketan. The Upanayana ceremonies were performed according to Vedic rites with eminent pundits as witnesses. My trial began early one morning when with the head shorn, wearing a yellow robe and holding a long stick (*dandi*) in one hand and a beggar's bowl in the other, I had first of all to recite the Upanishad slokas and then take the bowl round to each of the guests assembled at the Mandir. Then followed the usual confinement for three days, during which the "gayatri" mantram had to be learnt.

But unfortunately this was not to be the end as far as I was concerned. Among the pundits there had come the renowned Vedic scholar Brahmabratा Samadhyayi from Benares. He told my father that although my pronunciation was good I should be taught to recite the Vedas strictly according to the Vedic rules. He was the only authority on the subject and volunteered to stay on to teach me how to chant the Vedas. The lessons began with the meticulous rendering of the sound of  $\epsilon$  (*Om*). After a week of drilling I did not find that I had made any progress in comprehending the mystic significance of this symbol. But the lessons continued. Thus my earliest recollection of the Asrama is always associated with these feeble attempts at uniting my thin treble with the

sonorous bass of the giant-looking pundit, in chanting stanzas from the Sama-Veda.

After about three years, most of which had been spent at Shelidah, at the age of twelve I came back to Santiniketan and this time for good. Father had obtained permission from Maharshi to start a school to be called Brahmacharyasrama at Santiniketan. The formal opening ceremony was to be performed on the 7th Paus, 1901. Father brought us a few months in advance so that he could make preparations beforehand. He had, in the meantime, sold his bungalow on the Puri Seabeach to get the nucleus of a fund to start the institution Jagadananda babu, who had served under him at Shelidah and whose services he considered too valuable to be wasted in a zemindary office, and a Homeopath doctor were immediately requisitioned to help him.

As the Guesthouse could not be utilized for the purpose of the school, the only other existing building, a three-roomed house in the southwest corner of the garden, was given over to it. The first step taken in equipping the school was to fit up a Library in one of the rooms in this house. Father brought his magnificent collection of books from Calcutta. The Library has never been shifted from this house. The original building still forms the core of the present Library, but is so engulfed by later additions that it can hardly be distinguished. After the books had been safely stacked, it was thought necessary to give attention to the accommodation for students. The doctor was entrusted with the construction of a dormitory. In those days we had fortunately no caste feeling ; the doctor, besides his

professional work, carried on the duties of the manager, the engineer, the kitchen superintendent and a host of other offices. A mudhouse was built next to the Library—a most inconveniently long and narrow shed, which remained for many years the only shelter for students as well as teachers, and a portion of which still survives as the Adi-Kutir. The only other building to boast of was the kitchen, a few walls of which still form part of the Office.

By appealing to some friends four pupils were obtained from Calcutta, myself bringing up the number to five. I do not remember the names of any of this first batch as none of them stayed for long. We were all clothed in long yellow robes as befitting Brahmacharies. On the day of the opening, however, we were given red silk dhotis and chaddars and we felt very proud and important to stand in a row in the Mandir for everybody to gaze at. My uncle Satyendranath conducted the prayers and there was quite a distinguished gathering on the occasion. The 7th Paus Mela was already an established institution of Santiniketan. Strangely enough its character has remained much the same through more than half a century. Formerly it lasted for only one day. Father had composed some news songs for the opening ceremony, one of which, যোরা সত্ত্বে 'পরে মন \* remained as the school song for many years until it was replaced by আমাদের শান্তিনিকেতন. †

With the gradual increase in the number of pupils more teachers began to arrive. My old Sanskrit teacher Pandit Shivadhan Vidyarnava was brought from the Adi Samaj. A Sindhi disciple of Brahmabandhab

\* We dedicate ourselves to truth

† Our Santiniketan

Upadhyaya, Mr. Rewachand, who became afterwards known as Animananda Swami when he founded a school on the lines of Santiniketan in the outskirts of Calcutta, joined shortly afterwards as a teacher of English. He was a Roman Catholic and a strict disciplinarian ; his was the kind of discipline learnt on the cricket field and applied to everyday life. This hardly appealed to father and clashed with the ideal of freedom and self-determination which he wanted to establish in the Asrama and as a consequence, Mr. Rewachand had to leave very soon. Subodh babu a cousin of Srish Chandra Majumdar—the author and old friend of father's came as our teacher of Bengali. With him also arrived Santosh Majumdar as a student. We were the only two in the Matic (in those days called the Entrance) class and we became bosom friends. The system of electing monitors and captains was introduced from the beginning of the school. But the election was observed merely as a formality during the five years Santosh and myself remained as boarders. We took turns in captaining the wild assortment of students that came ; for, Santiniketan unfortunately was regarded more or less as a reformatory in those days. This long continued training in leadership has been of invaluable help to both of us in later life.

It is difficult to remember the chronological order in which the old batch of teachers came to the Asrama. But it was during the second and third year that teachers like Hari Charan Banerji, Bhupendranath Sanyal, Satish Chandra Roy, Ajit Kumar Chakravarty, whose names are still familiar to most persons connected with the Asrama, joined the institution. Our first Headmaster, in

the real sense, was Sjt. Monoranjan Banerji, a cousin of Rev. Kalicharan Banerji, who took charge when we were preparing for the Entrance Examination. He did not remain very long as the place did not suit his health.

The life led by both pupils and teachers was not only simple but almost austere. The ideal of *Brahmacharya* was the keynote to everything. The yellow uniform, which covered up the poverty of clothes ; a pair of blankets which served as our only bedding ; the vegetarian meals comparable to jail diet in their dull monotony; these were the standards laid down. Nobody wore shoes or even sandals and such luxuries as tooth pastes or hair oils were tabooed. I think one of the sorest trials my mother ever had was when father insisted that I should live in the school boarding. She could not bear to see the miserable condition in which we lived, especially with regard to food and tried to console herself by frequently inviting the teachers and students and feeding them with tempting dishes prepared by herself. She would never even resent when surreptitious raids were made on her pantry.

In spite of everything all the poverty and want, the lack of every comfort and convenience—nobody complained because we really believed in simple living and took pride in our poverty. However simple the living and meagre the salaries drawn by the staff, the strain on father's resources to maintain the school must have been terrible. The institution had no income of its own besides the annual Rs. 1200/- drawn from the Santiniketan Trust. For several years students were not charged fees of any kind. They got not only free education, but food and

very often clothings were provided free of cost. The whole burden had to be borne by father when his own private income was barely Rs 200/- a month. My mother had to sell nearly every ornament she possessed for the sake of the school before she died in 1903.

But it would be wrong to emphasize only the dark side of the picture. We were essentially a happy lot and the life was very rich and interesting inspite of our outward poverty. Whenever father was present he poured his soul into the institution and made it lively by singing songs which he never tired of composing, reciting his poems, telling stories from the Mahabharata, playing indoor games with the boys, rehearsing plays and even taking classes. All the teachers lived with us in the same dormitory and we shared the joys and sorrows equally between us. There was a wonderful feeling of genuine camaraderie. The teachers never resented the many practical jokes we played on them because they knew there was respect underneath the harmless levity indulged on occasions. We had a wholesome fear of Jagadananda babu but that did not

sometimes dissuade us from playing tricks on him. I remember particularly one instance. Once when he was soundly sleeping on a cot in the verandah a few of us lusty fellows quietly lifted him up with the bed and then with cries of "hari-bol" made straight for the 'bund' where the immersion took place. "Master-mashay" was all the time showering curses on us, but we did not mind because we could detect a faint flicker of a smile hidden behind his furious exterior.

We were indeed a happy family—perhaps too big to be always homogeneous, but toleration for the weaknesses and idiosyncrasies of individuals and respect for each other kept the group together in a bond of brotherly feeling, which gave a distinct character to the institution. Talented youngmen hardly ever came to us, but whatever their intellectual attainments, a few months at the Asrama stamped every student with a character which easily marked him off from the crowd. This, to my mind, has been the real contribution of Santiniketan to our country.

(Continued from page 34.)

Sj. Sukumar Chatterjee, Deputy Sachiva, Sriniketan, made a brief but interesting tour in Orissa. He was accompanied by Dr. Sudhir Sen of the Research Department. They began with the Ganjam district where they visited the Co-operative Central Banks at Berhampore. They were greatly interested in the irrigation system consisting of tanks scattered all over the district and fed by canals. Coming to Cuttack they visited the Madhusudan Cottage Industries Institute,

the Government Farm and examined the activities of the nation-building departments. They were particularly struck with the impetus given to fruit-growing in all parts of the province, especially to the cultivation of oranges of several varieties.

Sj. Chatterjee and Dr. Sen had an interview with the Hon'ble Mr. Kanungo, the Development Minister. They are very grateful for the readiness and courtesy of all the officers with whom they came into contact in course of the tour.

...

We extend a hearty welcome to Prof. Ju Peon, Head of the Department of Fine Arts, Chinese National University, who is shortly arriving here in the capacity of a visiting professor. Prof. Peon is an artist of international reputation and excels especially in the painting of landscapes and portraits. During his one term's stay he will, besides lecturing on Chinese Art, hold an exhibition.

of his paintings He also expects to make a portrait study of Gurudeva.

Dr. D. M. Sen, Superintendent of Education, Sriniketan, left on October 30 on a three weeks' tour of Upper India. He will visit the Basic Education centres in Bihar, United Provinces and Delhi. Dr. Sen will also visit independent institutions like Kashi Vidyapith, Dayalbagh of Agra and Jamia Millia of Delhi.

## Alumni News

Our hearty congratulations to Dr. K. P. Mukherji, sometime Adhyapaka, Visva-Bharati, on being appointed as the Principal of the Azizul Haque College, Bogra. Our congratulations are also due to Krishnalal Shridharani, a graduate of Visvabharati Sikshabhavana, on whom a Doctorate in Journalism has recently been conferred by the Columbia University. He is at present engaged in journalistic work in U. S. A

A meeting of the Calcutta Branch of the

Santiniketan Asramika Sangha took place on October 14 at 210 Cornwallis Street. Aurobindo Bose gave an illuminating discourse on "Europe since the Great War." Pramathanath Bisi took part in the discussion. Vaman Bhandari and Amalendu Dasgupta sang a few songs.

Following marriages have taken place :—

Mukul Chaudhury to Sudhir Khastagir,  
Monica Sen to Hiren Ghose,  
Anukana Dasgupta to Suresh Khastagir.

## Obituary

We record with deep regret the untimely death of P. V. Reddy which took place in Calcutta after a protracted illness.

He passed the Degree examination of the University of Calcutta in 1936 as a student of Sikshabhavana, Visvabharati. During his four years' stay here, he had endeared himself to everybody by his unfailing courtesy and cheerful disposition. We share his loss along with the bereaved and with them pray that his soul might rest in peace.

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# VISVA-BHARATI NEWS

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Volume VIII

DECEMBER, 1939

Number VI

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## THE SONG BIRD

When the evening steals on western waters,  
Thrills the air with wings of homeless shadows,  
When the sky is crowned with star-gemmed silence  
And the dreams dance on the deep of slumber ;  
When the lilies lose their faith in morning  
And in panic close their hopeless petals,  
There's a bird which leaves its nest in secret, --  
Seeks its song in trackless paths of heaven.

*Rabindranath Tagore*

## Santiniketan and Sriniketan

‘ Gurudeva returned to the asrama on November 11 after a stay of nearly two months at Mungpu in the district of Darjeeling. On his way back he stayed for a few days in Calcutta and on November 9 attended a meeting of the Visva-Bharati Sammelani where he read out to the members a story which he had written during the holidays.

...

‘ Towards the middle of December he will go to Midnapore to perform the opening ceremony of the Memorial Hall built there in the sacred memory of Pandit Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar. His visit to Midnapore will however be a very short one and he will be here to participate in the anniversary celebrations.

...

‘ Upacharya C. F. Andrews who has been undergoing a course of electric treatment will return to the asrama towards the second week of December and will spend the winter term at Santiniketan. Owing to the war he has had to cancel his tour in South Africa where his presence was urgently needed by the Indian community faced with several anti-Indian legislative proposals.

...

With effect from November 15, Krishna R Kripalani took over charge as the Adhyaksha of the Patha-Bhavana ( School Department ). Kishori Mohan Santra has

come back to Santiniketan in his old capacity as the Assistant General Secretary. Sjt. Kripalani however continues to act as the Editor of the Visva-Bharati Quarterly.

‘ We regret to lose the services of Balraj Sahni, M. A., who has recently joined the Hindusthani Talimi Sangha, Wardha and will not be able to continue his work as an adhyapaka here. The vacancy created by his resignation is not being filled up at present.

...

The annual general meeting of the Visva-Bharati will be held on December 24 at 8 a. m. in the Amra-Kunja. Five new members are to be elected to the Samsad this year and the following names have been proposed for election:—Apurvakumar Chanda; Mahamahopadhyaya Vidhushekhar Bhattacharya, Bhupati Mohan Sen, Kishori Mohan Santra, Dr. Pramathanath Banerji and Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis. The Santiniketan Samiti will send two new representatives and Sriniketan one. The voting papers must reach the General Office by December 20.

...

We gratefully acknowledge the gift of a hundred volumes of books of the World’s Classics Series from Kunwar Madhavendra P. N. Singh of Allahabad. The books have been placed in the General Library.

...

## The Crisis\*

By Rabindranath Tagore

( A letter to Dr. Amiya Chakravarty )

They ask me to write on the present situation, indicating some way out, but I know of none.

Here we stand : on one side the ruling power, armed in its fortress with all paraphernalia of repression, protected by stringent laws and red-turbaned hordes. That the country can be held only thus is their faith. Crowded, on the other hand, are helpless multitudes with empty hands and pockets. Advised to accept non-violence as the panacea leading to deliverance and permanent security, they cannot yet entirely pin their faith to it. Because, nowhere in the world is this principle being practised, for good or for worse. To save man from such a violent beast as man, violent means are needed : this teaching is being followed up everywhere by adequate preparation and accumulation of material. Where men are debarred from all education, they are also prevented from acquiring this particular form of it. Such people must for ever be recognised as game for man-hunters. Hedged in on all sides they are denied even the right to escape like deer ; in Reserve Forests they live, belonging to royal sportsmen.

I remember the story : some credulous lady had asked Voltaire whether flocks of sheep could be slaughtered by magic words. Madam, he replied, that can certainly be done, but some arsenic is also necessary. Deadly administration of arsenic is so widely prevalent that neither those who are being killed nor the killers are able to discern any other path.

Violent worship, propitiating the gods by sacrificial blood, has continued from man's barbarous past up to this day. Through love alone is worship, great teachers have sometimes proclaimed, but the world has taken this to be true on the spiritual, not on the practical plane. In spheres of life where results can be ignored such teaching signifies, but where results are needed—so runs popular conscience—the gods have to be won over by sanguinary offerings. Behind this lies a patient's faith in bitter, pungent medicines ; medicines, indeed, he is convinced, tasting the lacerating drops. So in world-wide political pharmacies virulent remedies are being piled up. Virile tonics, blood-red force advertised in their colour. Physicians with high records of death to their credit are venerated ; countless deaths may, conceivably, slowly change a doctor's belief in a particular system of treatment. Death's institutes have been opened everywhere ; millions of students are being killed to supply lessons,—perhaps man may learn something final from this, but when or where I cannot prophesy. What we find is that lessons go on endlessly, more and more loudly repeated in the class room they seem never to terminate. Such being the case, I would prefer silence, not knowing what answers to give to path-seekers.

The unprotected ruins, in which we live on the ancient high road, have offered no resistance to invaders down the centuries ; armies have marched from outside, and traders ; they have jumped on our backs, entered our store-room. We are left with

\* Authorised translation.

bent spines and only remnants in our larders. Therefore, we too cannot boast that we have learnt our lessons ; our ancient systems have not, it has to be confessed, helped us in passing the test of history with any merit. Even then we are alive today, some people proudly declare. But there are kinds of living which are merely delayed death. Such is our condition. To the chief disciples or professors of violence I say this, for long have we seen the nature of their success, to a great measure we ourselves have borne its burden : are they now at the summit of their victory ? Have they passed the test of humanity ? Engaged in violent rivalry, whose triumph today do they crave ? The triumph of violence. This power can never reach peace till utter destruction is complete. Not only is it destroying man's livelihood but poisoning his heart ; his noblest treasures are being bombed and razed to dust. Of ourselves we have ample reason to be ashamed, but this tossing on the swing of endless catastrophe that we see to-day,—whose shame is it ?

Violent power uses man's weakness as footstool, it crushes the soil of helpless humanity to raise its own crop. Thus its trade prospers. In this trade, the powerful have, for a long time, acquired bulk and extended their domain of influence. They have suppressed large numbers of men putting them under heavy yoke—we know how. Power calculates on a long range lest any of its victims show signs of strength, and preserves unremitting vigilance. If, sometimes, exhausted by the weight and expensiveness of a giant machinery of manslaughter it seeks to lessen the load for a while, with a start the great mistake is discovered. To preserve full faith in its glory, violent power has now realised the unlimited need of weapons for massacre.

History offers no parallel to the awful watchfulness of violence with its deadly nets spread in sea, land and air ; the civilised powers of the West advance in military formation raising innumerable arches of homicidal victory. None dares stop lest some one else steal a march upon it.

In 1930 I went to Germany. That the victors had most certainly won was still being rubbed into the minds of the victims in diverse ways. On the tablet of historical memory they were trying to perpetuate humiliation in black ink. The defeated countries with their limbs cut up and divided, were made to remember their crippled condition. Grosser stupidity from the point of view of political self-interest cannot be conceived. But this mentality befits brute force—it must enjoy its egolust. Merciless vindictiveness blinds its judgment and sense of right. It was proved that victory does not pacify the violent anger of the victor ; its savagery becomes more inflamed. I was then brought into contact with the youth of Germany, my whole mind was attracted to them. They were determined to lead their country towards a noble fulfilment. No anger was there nor hatred, but the urge of new creation. Truth's triumph over barbarism depends on such fulfilment, but the power of violence which is barbaric prevents people from their natural fruition and delights in insulting man's humanity. It was this power which at last stung youthful Germany into a violent reaction and made it take to its own savage ways. In the centre of Europe was created a huge anarchy of violence.

Blind power has spread an acquiescent inertia all over our land, in Europe the same power creates hard aggressive inertia. Our picture limned in pale lines will not strike any eye, but the incessant tussle of violence

in Europe has today become crudely manifest. He who reaps the harvest of one war, we have seen, does not forget to sow the seeds of another.

Today war has come in full flood, the whirlwind of destruction has struck numerous sails of violent Nations. Some side or other will get temporary results which it will call victory. After that will proceed the cultivation of thorns to inflict wounds on humanity. That is why I say, whether of this or the other side, whose victory could I desire ? Victory in any case would mean the triumph of violence.

I am not a politician. Our political leaders imagine that if we assisted the ruling power in this war, we might gain some reward. To render such assistance would be in the nature of a bargain. It could not be an act of friendship ; long years have passed but the occasion for cultivating such relations has not arisen. We have not felt that the rulers trusted us, but encountered hard glances of suspicion. Termination of the war will not record the triumph of friendliness but of might. Might would regard the expression of gratitude as a burden, the sense of responsibility and modesty resulting from such acknowledgement would be extremely irksome for it. After the last war India experienced this. Just when the moment arrived for settling accounts, whipping, caning, jails, fines, troops and punitive police also came thick and fast.

The spectacle provided by a country which is ruled by force is mournfully familiar to us. Doubtless that spectacle is familiar also to the power whose royal umbrella casts its shadow all over the land. Millions are suffering from semi-starvation, illiteracy, lack of medical help ; drinking water is polluted or dried up ; where communications

are badly needed, roads and waterways are non-existent. Persons seated on high pedestals might plead cultivated ignorance of such facts ; if so, such ignorance, we shall know is symptomatic of the rule of force. What our country lacks, I have mentioned ; but what is very much there, is the communal problem. Originating in weakness, it thrives on low vitality, and this condition becomes chronic where all responsibility is taken away. The machinery for administration, fed with oil and coal, thrives under the ruler's own protection ; those who are being administered, however, continue to go short of food and dress. The machine must live, unharmed.

Countries, benevolently governed by their own people, offer a contrast to our conditions. Numerous ranks of the unemployed are maintained by the State ; sacrificing a nation's vitality by allowing starvation, would be intolerable to a political system which is not based on mere force, but on co-operation. In the realm of physical and mental needs, in knowledge and action, all sorts of beneficence abound ; slightest want would attract comment in such countries. Where, due to the miserly nature of the rulers, friendly relations with the people are brushed aside, perseverance is devoted to making political control complete. But, power in its blind aggressiveness, does not realise that cruel, barren, humiliating relationship between man and man can never last ; the time comes when the inner heat becomes unbearable and fetters are broken asunder. How truth will effect the change from force to friendliness, I cannot specify : but that the powers, arrogant with victory, will feel less inclined to offer us concessions is not difficult for me to guess. Authority, feeling safe, will discover itself to be firmly fixed for ever.

Earl Baldwin, in a lecture delivered in America, has tried to explain that the democratic form of government, which is British, is far superior in high idealism to the totalitarian form which belongs to Germany. The root difference between totalitarianism and democracy is that democracy recognises the dignity and individual liberty which man, as the son of God, can claim. According to him, the all-uniting divine dispensation that lies behind democracy is, in days of crisis, a better support than all external urgencies.

In political discussions, politicians do not usually refer to divine dispensations. Because, in establishing divine law they would have to do so in time and place, and on a world-wide basis. If a particular system belongs to divine order then such a system is not for England alone, we too have an equal place in it. Being human, and sons of God, we too can claim respect for our dignity and freedom in a righteous system. If such things are denied to us in the political realm, then it is not right, at least, to take God's name in decrying totalitarian politics. Political principles can be confined to one's own nation, but God's purpose cannot be confined. Regarding his nation's ideals, Earl Baldwin says, "these ideals require men of their own free will to co-operate with God himself in the raising of mankind." The idea of co-operation with God may naturally arise when goodwill is dominant within one's own racial sphere; but it cannot be at all natural, when ruling other races by force, to think of joining God himself in raising men. In fact, we have got proof to

the contrary. We do not feel any enthusiasm, therefore, when our rulers profess devotion to democratic principles in talking to their relations; but it hurts our ears when they invoke God's name in this connection.

The question remains: which way lies our goal. The path that big nations are insanely pursuing is undoubtedly closed to us. It is doubtful where even the mighty ones will reach in their race. This only can be said, mysterious are the ways of history. Even the sorrows of the weak have been known to prick a hole in the ship of the powerful. In history, wars and struggles are not the only opportunities; the despair of the betrayed also attracts favourable occasions—from where they might come I cannot say just now. It is because we cannot clearly indicate this, that the sudden advent will one day overwhelm the mighty powers. It is those unfortunate people for whom the friendly road is closed by thorns and the road of war also obstructed, who cast their eyes with intense longing on the unexpected ways of Providence. But we are not reassured when those who force down other races in the spheres of politics, and go on increasing machinery for manslaughter in war, take the excuse of God's name on their lips. Taking God's own name we shall say that though we may seem from outside, to be helpless, yet we are not helpless. In the world of men where we live, disinterested humanity which recognizes us as its own will, from somewhere, come and join our side. What, otherwise, is the meaning of Providence?

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Lino-cut by Sm. Purnima Roy.

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# VISVA-BHARATI NEWS

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Christmas Day, 1939.

Those who struck Him once  
in the name of their rulers,  
are born again in this present age.

They gather in their prayer halls in a pious garb,  
they call their soldiers ; "Kill, kill," they shout ;  
in their roaring mingles the music of their hymns,  
While the Son of Man in His agony prays, "O God,  
Fling, fling far away this cup filled with the  
bitterest of poisons."

Santiniketan,  
25.12.39.

*Rabindranath Tagore*

## Santiniketan & Sriniketan

The anniversary of the foundation of the Asrama was celebrated as usual during the 7th, 8th. & 9th. of Pous ( 23, 24, & 25 Dec. ). The celebrations were inaugurated by Gurudeva with a Divine service in the Mandir on the morning of the 7th. For the first time Gurudeva had written out his message and had it printed beforehand, though the inspiration of the moment carried him much beyond the limitations of the written word. The address in the original Bengali will be published in the Magh issue of the "Prabasi." The authorised English translation has already appeared in the current issue of the *Visva-Bharati Quarterly*.

Our resources were strained to their utmost limit by the unusual influx of visitors this year. It is estimated that more than five hundred had to be accommodated as guests in the Asrama besides the thousands of village people who came for the mela. The authorities are seriously considering what arrangements may have to be made if the Utsav attracts increasingly larger numbers of visitors in successive years. Although we welcome visitors to our festivals it is a matter of regret to the inmates of the asrama that many of them come more for the purpose of enjoying a cheap holiday than of participating in the functions on these occasions.

The mela attracted a huge gathering of people from the surrounding villages, especially on the second evening. Besides the usual festivities and the Xmas service conducted by Mr. C. F. Andrews, meetings of the Karma-Samiti, Samsad and the Annual General Meeting of the Visva-Bharati Parishat took place during these days. There was a good gathering of the alumni and the Asramika Sangha held their re-union in the mango-grove presided over by Mr. C. F. Andrews.

\* \* \* \*

The annual celebrations were followed by another happy event, the marriage of Srimati Nandini Tagore ( the only daughter of Sj. Rathindranath Tagore ) with Sriman Ajitsinh Morarji Khatau of Bombay. The wedding which was celebrated at Uttarayana on the 30th of December was the occasion of a happy gathering of many distinguished guests, friends and relatives of both the parties. Sm. Nandini is an ex-student of our School ( in fact she was born and brought up at Santiniketan ) and she and her new partner in life carry with themselves the blessings and the best wishes of the whole asrama.

## Christmas\*

C. F. Andrews.

Many of us have seen either the original or a reproduction of Raphael's picture, 'The Sistine Madonna'. The Child in His Mother's arms looks out upon us with a divine wonder in His young eyes as if to take in the mystery of this new and strange world which He has entered. He has also in His face that perfect innocence of childhood which is the nearest reflection of God in Man that we can ever dream of on earth.

We look from the Child to the Mother's face, the Madonna, and we feel that in her eyes also is that same look of wonder, but we can see that her chief wonder is in the mystery of her Child. She is one with her Child and He is one with her.

No greater picture has ever been painted in the West than this. It seems almost to have gone beyond the reach of Art and to be a pure creation of Beauty.

Raphael's Madonna sums up for us the supreme meaning of Christmas Day as it has come to be observed in the Christian Church : it is the festival of the Mother, the Child, and the Home. My own mother used to appear to me like that Madonna when I looked up into her beautiful face on Christmas Eve as she told us the story over again of the birthday of Jesus. There is nothing to us in the West more beautiful and tender than that ! However well it may be known to us, it always comes with a fresh surprise of joy when we hear it from our mother's lips at Christmas tide.

It is easy for me still to picture my own mother as she sat in her arm chair before

the fire while we were gathered round her on the hearth looking into the flames as if we were in fairy land listening to tales of what happened long ago. She told us how Mary, the Mother, had journeyed all day long and had come at even-tide to Bethlehem. Great was her sadness when she heard that there was no room for her in any house or inn. So it was in a stable, with the cattle standing by, that she had brought forth her first-born son. The oxen in their stalls had watched her with their mild eyes as if they understood her pain.

But afterwards she had known a depth of joy greater than all her anguish ; for at midnight her first-born Son had been born into the world, whose name should be the Prince of Peace. There, in the manger, she had wrapped Him in swaddling clothes and laid Him among the cattle which silently gazed on her Child.

My mother would teach us, at this point, always to love the dumb animals for Jesus' sake ; for they had been with Him at His birth. She would go on to read the words of the Bible, "There were shepherds abiding in the fields keeping watch over their flocks by night. And lo, the angel of the Lord came down upon them and the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and they were sore afraid.

"And the angel said unto them, Fear not ; for, behold, I bring unto you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day, in the city David, a Saviour which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you : Ye shall

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\* An authorised Version of the address delivered by Upacharya C. F. Andrews at Santiniketan on Christmas morning, 1939.

find the Babe, wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger.

"And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill towards men."

Then we used to sing together the Christmas hymn which told about the same event. They were poor, humble folk who came first to offer worship to Jesus,—the cattle of the stable and the shepherds of the field. For He had become One with those who were the humblest. The Poet, Rabindranath Tagore, has written concerning God Himself:

"Here is thy footstool, and there rest  
thy feet,  
Where are the poorest and the  
lowliest and the lost."

The second story followed, which we loved best of all, how the wise men from the East had also come to His cradle and offered their costliest gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh. One of these, she said, had come from India, and India became for me in consequence, the land of romance. She told us also how the one who brought myrrh had come from Africa, which was a land of sorrow.

Such then were the stories that used to delight our hearts each Christmas, and they brought back to us the wonder of that Child whose face Raphael had painted in his picture.

Milton, in some of his greatest lines, has added to the mystery of that world event with his poetic imagination, representing how, for a moment's pause, war and tumult ceased on that sacred night when the Prince of Peace was born.

No war, or battle's sound,  
Was heard the world around ;

The idle spear and shield were high uphung.

The hooked chariot stood

Unstained with hostile blood.

The trumpet spake not to the armed throng.

And kings sat still with aweful eye

As if they surely knew their sovran  
Lord was by.

But peaceful was the night

Wherein the Prince of Light

His reign of peace upon the earth began.

The winds with wonder whist

Smoothly the waters kissed,

Whispering new joys to the mild ocean,

Who now hath quite forgot to rave,  
While birds of calm sit brooding on the  
charmed wave.

When we think over in our minds why the birth of Jesus should have taken place in a tiny town in a tiny corner of a Roman province, we remember that such beginnings of world-shaking events represent one of the supreme features of human history, which repeats itself from age to age. It is not among mighty warriors and kings, and great ones of the world, that God is born among men, but among "the poorest, and lowliest and lost."

"My heart," says the Poet, "can never find its way to where *Thou* keepest company among the companionless, among the poorest, and the lowliest, and the lost."

Let us then be full of thankfulness this Christmas morning and join with the humble shepherds as they offer their obeisance to the Child in His Mother's arms, who came to bring peace and good-will to mankind. We may not have gold to offer, but we can present Him with the frankincense of our devotion and the myrrh of human suffering and sorrow. We can join with all the world, even in this time of cruel war and evil passion, in celebrating this Christmas Festival of the Mother, the Child, and the Home.

## World Order

### *A Correspondence*

*November 23, 1939.*

Dear Gurudev,

It's not easy to write and I'd rather sit in your little mud house and hear you once again and talk over the future of mankind For in spite of the war I can't help feeling that great days are in front of us.

We may not live to experience them, but mankind is approaching a critical corner and I have no fear of our ability to round it myself. The world has been thro just as terrible an upheaval before and somehow the better and more cooperative things remained and the less cooperative disappeared.

I remember well your discussion on the mastodons and dinosaure, which, by their very bigness, their dependence upon the wrong kind of insurance policies, sacrificed their power to adjust and to meet changed conditions with new enterprise and new forms of cooperation.

This pamphlet+ then is the best sort of Christmas card I can send you.

How we shall fare in war I don't know, but if those of us who are still free to think and plan fail now, we have no excuse when the day of opportunity arrives. How important every activity at Santiniketan and Sriniketan looks from here in the light of world conditions !

Of our little group here, one has gone to Holland and the Scandinavian countries

to contact thinking groups there, one to Belgium, one to the U. S. A. and two of us leave for Paris this week end.

My best love to you and all the family around you, this Christmas.

Your devoted  
Leonard.

*December 27, 1939.*

My dear Leonard,

My warmest good wishes to Dorothy and yourself for the New Year.

I have read your letter and the P. E. P pamphlet with profound interest—it does one good to know that all civilised thought and planning have not been submerged by war-passions. Your letter gives me new hope and is a confirmation of the spiritual integrity of the European civilisation in which I have always believed—the wide-awake humanity of the West that diplomatic machinations can never crush. I can realise from your brochure on *European Order and World Order* that the best minds of Europe are being put to a severe test, that they have the sanction of the peoples of Europe in

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\* *European Order And World Order* (published by P. E. P.).

trying to formulate a Federal Union which will unite the peoples in spite of the ring-leaders of blind Nationalism, who, sitting safely in the citadels of power, send the youth of the land to destroy each other on the battlefield. In Europe the real battle goes on—that between organised passion and the unconquerable majesty of the human heart—and your peoples have the vitality to live through this struggle. I cannot believe in the victory of any belligerent powers,—as belligerents they are doomed. I can hope for the triumph of the united peoples of Europe under some such system as you propose in your letter to Lord Halifax and in the programme sponsored by the P. E. P.

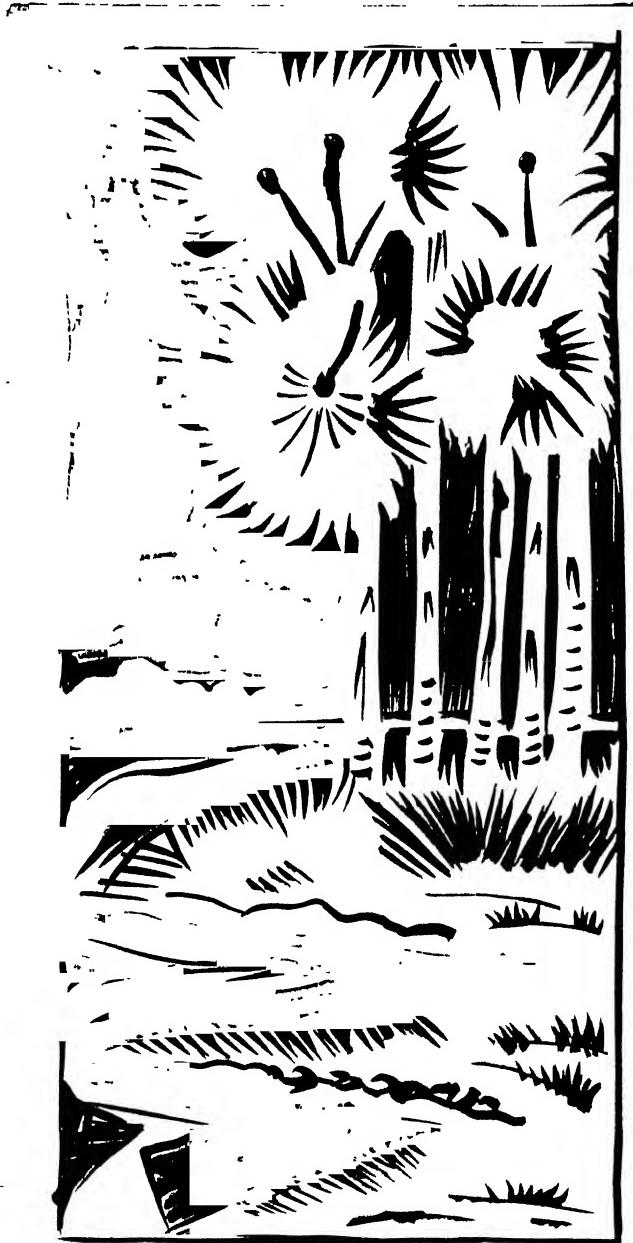
But what about India? It does not need a defeatist to feel deeply anxious about the future of millions who with all their innate culture and their peaceful traditions are being simultaneously subjected to hunger, disease, exploitations foreign and indigenous, and the seething discontents of communalism. Our people do not possess the vitality that you have in Europe; and the crisis, even before this war started in the West, had become acute in India. Needless to say, interested groups led by ambition and outside instigation, are to-day using the communal motive for destructive political ends. Could the P. E. P give us a lead in planning for a united India, in which the minority problem, shorn of its manufactured complexities, could be tackled at the root? We do

not want ready-made solutions by diplomats but a working basis for discussion, such as you have planned, in which some of the best minds of your country and ours—and of the United States—could participate. Not Round Table Conferences with politicians manipulating their hidden purposes, but a genuine fact-finding and explorative group to which intellectuals with statesmanlike gifts and possessing sober judgment could come and confer,—an extension of P. E. P activities in India. We, from Visva-Bharati, could contribute, and a few representative intellectuals from different Provinces could join with us.

My path, as you know, lies in the domain of quiet, integral action and thought. My units must be few and small, and I can but face human problems in relation to some basic village or cultural area. So, in the midst of world-wide anguish, and with the problems of over three hundred millions staring us in the face, I stick to my work in Santiniketan and Sriniketan, hoping that our efforts will touch the heart of our village neighbours and help them in reasserting themselves in a new social order. If we can give a start to a few villages they would perhaps be an inspiration to some others—and my life work will have been done.

Yours affectionately  
Rabindranath Tagore

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Lino-cut by Sujit Ray.

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# VISVA-BHARATI NEWS

Volume VIII

FABRUARY, 1940

Number VIII

## Santiniketan and Srimiketan

It is fortunate that Gurudeva has been able to have more or less a quiet time throughout the month of January. The number of his engagements in December last was so alarmingly out of proportion that our Upacharya C. F. Andrews thought fit to issue a statement requesting the public to allow Gurudeva his well-earned rest. We would be considerably relieved and thankful if the request is carried out in the same spirit in which it was made.

Autograph hunters (and they are a good few) desiring to add Gurudeva's singnature to their collection, will henceforward have the satisfaction of paying the minimum sum of one rupee as contribution towards a local Poor Students' Fund.

...

We regret that C. F. Andrews has been keeping rather indifferent health for some time now. He left for Calcutta on January 27 and has been admitted to the Presidency General Hospital for treatment. We earnestly hope to see him on the way to recovery at an early instant.

...

We are glad to announce the coming visit of Mahatmaji who is expected here on February 15. It is needless to emphasise that this visit is in the nature of a purely

personal one, and as such, Mahatmaji is entitled to a peaceful privacy during his brief stay in Santiniketan.

...

The most outstanding event of the last month was the reception given to Venerable Tai Hsu and other members of the Chinese Goodwill Mission.

Gurudeva in his address of welcome referred to the Goodwill Mission as an embassy of love and expressed the hope that the ancient friendship between the two great countries of China and India might be revived by contact in the realms of spirit and culture. Venerable Tai Hsu replying thanked Gurudeva and the inmates assembled for their cordial reception and remarked that he would convey the message of fellowship and love that India offered to China through her great Poet when he would return to his own country.

On the following day Venerable Tai Hsu gave a learned discourse on the 'Fundamental Aspects of Mahayana Buddhism' at Sinha Sadan under the auspices of the Sino-Indian Cultural Society.

Prof. Tun accompanies the party during their pilgrimage tour of India.

...

As usual the Kalabhavana and Sikshabhavana staff and students went on their annual excursion towards the first week of January. The Kalabhavana party under Nandalal Bose had been to Rajgir and Nalanda, and the Sikshabhavana students under Anil Kumar Chanda went to Rajmahal.

...

Among the prominent visitors whom we had the pleasure of having with us during the month under review may be named:—Her Highness the Dowager Maharani of Mayurbhanj, Mrs. Sophia Wadia, Hon'ble Mahatma Sris Chandra Nandy of Cossimbazar, Hon'ble Mr. Mukundabihari Mallik and others. It may be mentioned here that Her Highness has very kindly promised a handsome donation towards the starting of a Tennis Club exclusively for the members of the Sree Bhavana.

...

The Lokasiksha Samsad is fast growing to be an integral part and an active institution of Visva-Bharati. If it is able to function with the backing of popular support which it eminently deserves, the Samsad will undoubtedly remove a long-felt want in the sphere of Adult Education in Bengal. Under Lokasiksha scheme several books on varied subjects will shortly be brought out by the Visva-Bharati Publishing Board. The first two books of the series have already been published. The Prabeshika and Adya examinations under the auspices of the Samsad will commence on March 18. Several examination centres have been organized in and outside Bengal.

...

We are sorry to announce the resignation of Sisir Kumar Mitra of Sriniketan. As an Adhyapaka of Visva-Bharati for a period of

eight years he has rendered valuable service and our best wishes go with him wherever he goes.

...

The famous Chinese artist Ju Péon, in his velour hat, velveteen coat and Parisian tie, treading the shadowed paths of the Asrama with his sketch books, is already a familiar figure in Santiniketan.

A few days after his arrival a reception was accorded to him in Kalabhavana where Gurudeva welcoming the distinguished guest on behalf of India said,

"We welcome you as a messenger of China's great culture; you have brought to us in India the gift of spiritual sympathy which, centuries ago, united our ancient humanities. China and India shared the dawn of a great Renaissance, and even in these days of political cataclysm the memoried light of that comradeship remains.

True rebirth of a civilisation comes not from a deadly pursuit of power, which alienates and destroys, but from expression of its inner heart; such an expression, generous and ever renewing, brings neighbours together in the great adventure of mankind.

Here in Santiniketan we have striven to maintain that inner spirit of understanding, that integrity of work guided by ideals and linked with service of man, which, we believe Asia has to offer to civilisation. You have come to us with the vision of art, with the sensitive appeal of truth which must triumph over rude shocks of circumstance; your visit will strengthen us, and bring our effort nearer to fulfilment. With great joy I look forward to an era of warm kinship between our neighbouring lands, and to the assertion of historical forces in the East that will save us all from the encroaching darkness."

(Continued on page 62).

## Communal Unity

By Amiya Chakravarty

I would like to place before the readers of "The Visva-Bharati News" some practical suggestions for the eradication of the communal evil in India. These suggestions are the outcome of an I. S. S. Educational Conference in Lahore in which I had the privilege to take part. The Indian branch of the International Student Service has been organised by Mrs. S. K. Datta and is doing quiet but useful work under her guidance. It would be helpful if readers, examining the points raised below, came with their own reactions and findings for further exploration of remedial measures. That the situation is critical, and is daily becoming more critical, need not be stressed: the crisis threatens the foundation of India's nationhood.

(1) An important factor in establishing cultural unity would be the adoption of an Indian *lingua franca*. Some people advocate English as the common language but that is rather a counsel of despair. Others prefer Urdu or Hindi; a considerable majority agrees with the Congress resolution that Hindusthani should be accepted for inter provincial use. Difficulties with regard to the proportion of words, Sanskritic, Arabic or Persian they say, would have to be met by experts, meeting periodically: a standing committee should be set up by the Government.

We have to consider whether both the provincial vernacular and the all-India language can be kept up, with English as an indispensable third language. Provincial, National, and International—three languages would then form the basis of India's linguistic education. For the primary stage only provincial vernaculars need be taught.

The question of script: here, again, different viewpoints prevail. Some contend that scripts being rooted in immemorial culture cannot be discarded. Sikhs would stick to *Gurmukhi*, Muslims to *Urdu*, and Hindus to *Devanagari*. Any change in favour of one or the other would be stoutly opposed by the communities affected. The battle of scripts would include the numerous other scripts used in South India. One way out, perhaps a good way, is to adopt the Roman script. The stigma attaching to the Roman script is its association with the English, and, by implication, with British imperialism. This misconception should be removed: France, Italy, America, to name only a few countries, are using the Latin script; Germany is increasingly using it, Soviet Russia may adopt it any time. Turkey found no difficulty in making it the vehicle of its language. In India, the tribes such as the Khasis in Assam, or the Santals in Bengal and Behar, had languages but no scripts; now they are using the Roman script. In some ways one feels that the Latin script might meet with less resistance than any script associated with provincial or regional groups in India.

With the use of diacritical marks, now employed by Indologists, all the Indian languages could be fitted in without sacrificing sound-values. The mechanical and commercial advantages resulting from the use of the Roman script would be enormous; typing and printing facilities would be increased. Communal rivalry would be mitigated by the international and inter-provincial contacts ensuing from the disappearance of script-barriers.

(2) All-India festivals should be organized in which different communities could freely participate. The advent of the spring, the rains, the harvest-time, etc., could be made common occasions for rejoicing. Santiniketan, here, has given a lead to India. Some of the existing festivals can easily gain inter communal recognition if certain ceremonies and rituals were changed. The *Diwali*, for instance, with its lighting of lamps, appeals to the imagination. Purely religious festivals, intimately bound up with scriptural traditions, would have to be separately considered. In observing non-religious festivals, care should be taken not to introduce customs, etc., such as would hurt the beliefs of any community. National festivals should be created in celebration of the birth of India's illustrious men and women, held in veneration all over the land. Common rejoicing unites peoples, and has great psychological importance. The State, it is suggested, should take some responsibility in organizing festivals and not merely in enforcing law and order if disturbances broke out. Fairs, in India, are connected with various festivals and could be properly conducted for business and pleasure; our *melas* made for genuine co-operation between communities, as the economic and psychological factors both were blended in a wholesome manner.

The value of tournaments, etc., should be noted in this connection; it is good that Indian games like *Kabaddi* are being adopted for All India Sports.

(3) In the sphere of education, co-education from the primary schools to the end of University studies, is demanded. Boys and girls of different communities studying together are bound to develop loyalties which would strike at the very root of communalism.

Denominational schools and colleges separated the communities; the Punjab and Bengal are particularly unfortunate in this matter. Educational institutions should not be labelled with communal names. Technically they remain open to students of different communities, but in practice the names caused barriers and communal segregation is achieved perpetuating differences and misunderstanding.

Text-books should be purged of communal bias; books of history should be carefully scrutinised and rewritten whenever necessary before being introduced for school or University use. This should not mean, of course, the falsification of historical facts; an objective attitude with reverence for truth is demanded. An all-India Board, it is suggested, should be established for this purpose on lines similar to those adopted by the Intellectual Co-operation Section of the League of Nations at Geneva.

(4) The *purdah* and the caste-system should be vigorously tackled and abolished with the concerted will of communities. These are large issues to be faced by national institutions and concerned the Government, but individual and group conscience should be aroused by means of educational and reformist propaganda. The press, radio, cinema, as well as the platform should be properly used for this purpose. Students seldom betray any belief in either *caste* or *purdah*, but their normal and generous impulses often yield to communal pressure when they leave the University and enter public life. This must not be allowed to happen. Teachers and parents have a special responsibility in this matter. Students must know how to strengthen and organize their progressive ideas so that they lasted through life. No better antidote could be found than free and eager co-operation among students

in fighting social backwardness and fostering a rational outlook, specially in village areas.

Inter-dining is felt to be a necessity ; in a few College Hostels, here and there, this is already the rule. We advocate the abolition of articles of dress and head gear which specifically advertise communal groups.

( 5 ) Attention must be paid to the need of raising the standard of journalism in India. A sober press is a great ally in the cause of inter communal amity and understanding. Irresponsible press-comments inflame communal passion ; discipline should be enforced not by drastic censorship, though some censorship is desirable, but by public opinion. The press could help in the spheres of social reform and linguistic unity and in the organizing of common festivals and fairs. Here, again, those who belonged to the University, whether as teachers or students, must be

prepared to take up responsibility : we must remember that writers as well as business heads at the printing and publishing concerns are recruited from their ranks.

( 6 ) Training in leadership is needed. Modern psychology shows how leaders of the right kind could be produced by special training. Communalism would be exorcised in the cultural and social spheres if men born with natural gifts for leadership were further helped by training in intelligent methods of approach with regard to particular groups of people in the industrial, agricultural and other fields. Many institutions in the West, educational and otherwise, employ psychological experts for removing individual and group tensions, and impart regular training to students and teachers in the guidance of crowds during emergencies and also in normal times.

## A Letter

Following is the text of Gurudeva's reply to a letter addressed to him by Dr. H. W. Nevinson, President, The National Council for Civil Liberties, Morley House, 820 Regent Street, London, W. 1.

Dear Nevinson,

I have read your circular letter with great interest and entirely associate myself with the freedom of mind which you advocate. As you know, by accepting Presidentship of the Indian Council of Civil Liberties, I have publicly associated myself with organised effort to further democratic ideals for our peoples. The European and the Far-Eastern Wars as well as the complications in the Indian situation, have made our task more imperative.

My age and the work that I have been doing in this corner of Bengal where we have our Educational and Rural Development Centres, make it difficult for me to extend my activities in other fields.

But I join you in your crusade for the liberty of the human spirit and share your hope that the Western Civilisation will yet triumph over the ordeal that it has set for itself. In some ways it is even harder for India to pursue the path of freedom, not only our unnatural political situation which hampers free national expression but the legacies of medieval habits and thought will have to be overcome. It is, therefore, all the more necessary that leaders of thought in your country and ours should counteract the passions of the day and maintain close contact in our human endeavour.

With my regards,

Yours sincerely,

(sd.) Rabindranath Tagore

(Continued from page 58).

Replying to Gurudeva, Prof. Péon said, "Santiniketan is a place which corresponds to my ideal of a centre of art and culture. The whole world should make a pilgrimage here in order to breathe the joyful atmosphere of creative endeavour undertaken here under the direct inspiration of India's great poet. My visit here is that of a pilgrim. I have come not to give but to receive the great gifts that India may bestow upon my country and people as she did in the days gone by."

On December 21 Gurudeva opened an exhibition of the paintings of Prof. Péon numbering well over hundred and fifty. Prof. Tan Yun-Shan, in introducing the artist remarked that his services as a visiting professor had been made available to Visva-Bharati under the auspices of the Sino-Indian Cultural Society.

Prof. Ju Péon is the most outstanding of the younger artists of China and we, his admirers, earnestly wish that he might be introduced to a wider circle of connoisseurs during his two years' stay in India.

The Sikshabhavana was represented by Leela Eappen and Samsul Huda, both of 3rd year B. A. class, at the second annual inter-varsity debate organised under the auspices of the University Law College Union, Calcutta. We announce with pleasure that Leela Eappen was declared bracketed-first among the competitors. She has been awarded a gold medal and one silver medal.

...

The Government of Bengal have awarded two special scholarships to Ghagoo Majhi of 1st Year Science class and Trilokpati Saha of 3rd year B. A. class. The scholarships are tenable from July 1940.

We are grateful to the authorities of the Calcutta University for having consented to open an examination centre at Santiniketan from this year for the benefit of our students. This will prove a great help to our students many of whom come from outside Bengal.

...

The Pratisthata-Acharya has nominated Srimati Protima Debi and Srimati Lata Roy (Mrs. Satyendranath Roy) as members of the Samsad for the year 1940.

### Obituary.

We record with deep regret the death of Pandit Shivadhan Vidyarnava. Bengal has lost by his death an erudite Vedic scholar. Pandit Shivadhan was one of the earliest batch of teachers when our institution was first started.

## Alumni News

The Annual General Meeting of the Asramika Sangha took place in the Amra-kunja, Santiniketan on December 23 under the presidency of Ramananda Chatterji. Quite a large number of the present students attended the meeting at the invitation of the Sangha.

The President in his address spoke in high terms of the intimate life of personal contact with Gurudeva that the boys and girls of the earlier days of this Asrama were privileged to lead. "The present students might fill up a big gap in their life in this institution by coming in closer touch with the older ex-students who come here on the occasion of the foundation day festival, and they could thereby imbibe from them the right spirit of the life of this Asrama." He reminded the older boys of their indebtedness to the Institution in general and to Gurudeva in particular. It was their duty to plan out means by which they could pay back at least a part of thier debt to the 'Alma Mater'.

The meeting was then addressed by the following ex-teachers and ex-students : C. F. Andrews, Aurobindo Bose, and Jatindranath Mukherji.

At the Annual Meeting of the Sangha held on December 24 under the presidentship of Pradyot Kumar Sengupta the following were elected office bearers of the Sangha for the year 1940-41 :—

Prafulla Chandra Sen—Vice President  
Nirmal Chandra Chatterjee—General  
Secretary

Anupananda Bhattacharya—Asst. General Secretary  
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Narendranath Sen—Representative of the Calcutta Branch of the Sangha.

Nepal Chandra Roy was elected representative of the Sangha to the Samsad.

The following donations have been realised for Ex-students' Building Fund during the year 1939 :—

Arundhati Ghose	—	Rs. 150/-
Pradyot Kumar Sen Gupta	—	Rs. 100/-
W. M. Bhandare	—	Rs. 50/- (1st instalment)
Bhupendranath Poddar	—	Rs. 20/- (1st instalment)
Kunud Majumdar	—	Rs. 25/-
Pulinbihari Sen	—	Rs. 25/- (1st instalment)

We expect that our alumni in the different parts of the world will take more active interest in the matter and help the Ex-students' Building Fund Committee with their wholesome donations. They may send their donations to either of the following :—

1. Rathindranath Tagore : Santiniketan  
( Hony. Treasurer, Asramika Sangha )
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# VISVA-BHARATI NEWS

Volume VIII

MARCH, 1940

Number IX

## Reception to Mahatmaji

The formal reception to Mahatmaji was held at 3-30 P.M. in the sunlit Mango Grove where Mahatma Gandhi walked all the way from the Shyamali. Besides the inmates of the ashrama a large crowd from Bolpur and neighbouring villages silently bordered the grove which resounded with the sonorous chants of Vedic mantras.

Gurudeva garlanded Mahatma Gandhi and welcomed him in these words:

*"I hope we shall be able to keep close to a reticent expression of love in welcoming you into our ashrama and never allow it to overflow into any extrarayant display of phrases. Homage to the great naturally seeks its manifestation in the language of simplicity and we offer you these few words to let you know that we accept you as our own as one belonging to all humanity."*

*Just at this moment there are problems that darken our destiny. These we know are crowding your path and none of us is free from their attack. Let us for a while pass beyond the bounds of this turmoil and make our meeting to-day a simple meeting of hearts whose memory will remain when all the moral confusions of our distracted politics will be allayed and the eternal value of our true endeavour will be revealed."*

Replying in Hindi Mahatma Gandhi made feeling references to C. F. Andrews who, he said, was lying seriously ill in Calcutta :

*"At the very outset I call to mind Andrews whom I met the very first thing in the morning in Calcutta. It was his very great desire to see me and the poet meet here at Santiniketan. We all regret his absence at to-day's function. Let us pray that he may recover at an early date and that God may give him peace."*

*Even though I call this visit a pilgrimage, allow me to say that I am no visitor here. I feel as if I had come to my home. I recollect in this connection the early days of the ashrama in 1915 when its hospitality was made available to me and my family, who had nowhere to lay our heads.*

*Ever since that time I have had numerous occasions to realize what love Gurudeva has for me. Naturally, therefore, I seized the very first opportunity to come to him begging his blessings. As usual I have succeeded in my begging mission, I have received Gurudeva's blessings and my heart is full to the brim with joy. I shall speak no further, because where the relation is one of love words are of no use."*

## Santiniketan and Sriniketan

Gurudeva spent the better part of February in Santiniketan but for Feb. 21 when he went to Suri to open the local Annual Industrial Exhibition.

...

It is reported by Reuters that the Oxford University is conferring the hon. degree of D. Litt. on Gurudeva.

...

The most outstanding event of the month was the two days' visit of Mahatmaji and Kasturibai, who arrived on February 17 for two days of quiet repose in our asrama.

Despite precautions taken Santiniketan was inundated with visitors on the occasion and we were hard put to it to enable Mahatmaji to have his desired rest.

Immediately after arrival and subsequently Mahatmaji held anxious discussions with Gurudeva about the serious turn C. F. Andrews' illness had taken. In their speeches and talks they movingly referred to their friend 'Charlie' whose absence at the auspicious occasion was regretted by both.

During his sojourn here Mahatmaji visited the various departments of Santiniketan and Sriniketan, attended the performance of *Chandalika* especially arranged for him, granted several interviews and held long talks with Gurudeva. He was obviously delighted to renew old acquaintances and re-visit familiar spots.

On the morning of February 19 Mahatmaji took leave of Gurudeva and the inmates of the asrama and left for Calcutta.

We hope that he would pay many more visits to Santiniketan which he calls his "second home".

An account of the reception given to Mahatmaji at the *Amra Kunja* on the afternoon of his arrival will be found elsewhere.

...

Our Upacharya C. F. Andrews is lying seriously ill in the Presidency General Hospital, Calcutta.

He had an attack of dysentery while residing in the asrama and towards the last week of January decided to make a journey to Calcutta in order to undergo a course of treatment there. Subsequently he developed high blood pressure and other symptoms necessitating a minor operation for the latter. The operation along with a number of serious complications brought severe strain on his system and for over a week now his condition has been causing grave anxiety.

Numerous friends and admirers of C. F. Andrews will be glad to know that all possible arrangements have been made for his nursing and medical treatment. The medical council formed in co-operation between the authorities of the Presidency General Hospital and some of the best Indian physicians and surgeons outside, will enable the public to get authoritative news from time to time.

The second operation, which it seems has to be undertaken in order to deal radically with the disease, will be postponed for the time.

(Continued on page 69.)

## Stray Thoughts on The All-India Women's Conference—1940 Session

By Marjorie Sykes.

The fourteenth session of the All-India Women's Conference was held in Allahabad from January 27 to February 1 of this year. About one hundred and fifty delegates assembled from all parts of India, though the representation of different "reas" was somewhat uneven, Western India and Madras having a comparatively small one, partly no doubt owing to the distance. On the other hand the southern states of Travancore and Mysore each sent a good number, while a large number of members from Allahabad formed the reception committee and indefatigably looked after our comfort.

The delegates and some visitors were housed in "camp" fashion at Darbhanga Castle, a large house near a very pleasant park. I was lucky in being one of this number, for being "on the spot" made it much easier to get to know people in the informal contacts at meals and in the lounge which add so much to the value of a conference. Smaller meetings and group discussions were held here, while the full sessions of the conference and the public meetings were held at the University about half a mile away. The Magh Mela at the confluence of the Ganges and Jumna, the Naini Agricultural Institute, the Basic Training School for teachers (where training is given according to the Congress "basic" scheme of national education better known

as the Wardha Scheme) and the Harijan Ashram, provided places of excursion to suit all interests. We indulged in the refreshment of whole-hearted laughter at the delightful entertainment provided by a University Club, and experiences of all sorts were once more exchanged between widely separated provinces and states. The existence of states' groups and their active cooperation in such conferences as this is a specially valuable feature.

Quite strong feeling was evident on the recurrent problem of the language to be used at the conference. The first business session voted for the adoption of English as the official language for this year, and the number of delegates who did not know Hindustani was considerably greater than that of those who could not follow proceedings in English. In practice, however, a very large part of the business was transacted in Hindustani, and there was observable a slight tendency to neglect translations into English of important Hindustani speeches, while corresponding English statements were almost always translated as a matter of course. A little more consideration in this matter would have been acceptable to the southern delegates; they realised nevertheless, as some of them had perhaps not done before, the strength of the arguments for Hindustani as a universal national language. Every thinking person,

of course, agreed with Mrs. Pandit when in her address of welcome, she said that the habitual use of the *local* language in the transactions of constituent groups is essential if the conference is to gain strength from the non-English speaking elements in the population and make any impression on the women of the average home.

Subjects for discussion were divided into three groups, social, educational and economic. The system of group discussions was again adopted, as last year, and one afternoon was devoted to each group. Under each head a great variety of topics came up for discussion, the most outstanding being adult literacy, the need for machinery in each province to co-ordinate the work of all administrative departments under whose aegis social questions are dealt with, and the position of women in industry. While the conference suffered from a lack of expert information on industrial and economic questions, the great and genuine interest that they aroused is a recent and significant development, and it is to be hoped that especially in industrial centres like Calcutta and Bombay it will lead to more serious study of the conditions of life of women in factories and to enlightened pressure for their amelioration.

There was great unanimity in the resolution on war. In fact it was said to be difficult to get sufficient speakers on the subject because there was so little difference of opinion. The following points are however of interest.

(1) It was noticeable that all the speakers belonged to the younger generation.

(2) The point emphasized by everyone was the need for India's freedom as a proof of the sincerity of Britain's declarations. Although the principle of non-violence is mentioned in the third paragraph of the resolu-

tion, practically no reference was made to it; and one had the impression that some at least were paying it little more than lip service, and that their attitude might be different in different circumstances (e.g. if India were a really free agent to enter a war or not as she chose).

(3) Miss Meliscent Shephard, who attended as a delegate from Delhi, suggested an amendment substituting "the Allies" for "Gt. Britain" in the reference to statement of peace aims, in recognition of the fact that in this matter Gt. Britain cannot act alone. But the amendment was not even seconded; there was a feeling abroad that "we are not concerned with the others, only with Britain." A small incident perhaps, but one which shows how difficult it is for Indian women to think internationally while the urgent problems of their own country overshadow all else.

Mrs. Pandit's speech of welcome contained a reference to the younger women and their questioning of the methods and progress of the conference. No report of this conference would be complete that did not record this widespread discontent. One heard it commonly said that the delegates did not take their work sufficiently seriously, that the money spent on assembling the conference in Allahabad could have been much better spent on direct constructive work, and so on. Many delegates, especially the younger ones, are actively engaged in their own localities in constructive work in cooperation with men under Congress and other auspices and they question the value of "this vague talk". The reply, that the conference serves to educate women to take an interest in public questions and business procedure, is challenged in many quarters by those who say that both in procedure and in the quality and substance of its resolutions it has

deteriorated in recent years. I have considerable sympathy with these criticisms. It seems to me that the group discussions would have been much more valuable and thorough, and their findings more practical, had a smaller number of subjects been selected for consideration, and introduced by experts, adequate data being prepared and supplied to the delegates. In the selection of such subjects, it should be considered whether the conference would not be well advised to confine itself to those in which women have a peculiar interest and responsibility, leaving other questions of education and economics to bodies on which the sexes co-operate :

at the same time vigorously encouraging those of its members who can do so to work through such mixed bodies. I would say in conclusion however, that the very presence of so large a proportion of younger women, the fact that one of them ( Mrs. Lakshmi Menon ) was elected secretary, and the widespread and outspoken nature of the criticisms I have indicated are in themselves a sign of life, a ground of hope that far from stagnating, the near future will see the conference make those necessary and wise changes that every healthy organism must make if it is to live and grow.

(Continued from page 66.)

We offer our prayers for the early recovery of our Upacharya and hope that he will be spared to us and to humanity for many more years to come.

...

\* An exhibition of paintings of Ju Peon, Visiting Professor, Kalabhavana, was opened on Feb. 21 at the Hall of the Indian Society of Oriental Art, by Dr. Abanindranath Tagore.

The exhibition is held under the joint auspices of the Sino-Indian Cultural Society and the Indian Society of Oriental Art. It will remain open up to Feb 29.

As this exhibition is meant for collecting money for the China Relief Fund it is sure to be an attraction to all those lovers of art who want to combine aesthetic appreciation with charity for a well-deserved cause.

An article on the art of Ju Peon appears in the current number of the Visva-Bharati Quarterly

January 29 and 30 were declared holidays on account of the annual Visva-Bharati Sports. The two days fixture of no less than fifty different events was run through with very great success. There was a large number of entries especially from the Kiddies' section,—a happy sign indeed. Bulk was the determining factor in this year's tug-o'-war event won by the staff as against the students.

Our congratulations to the following champions in eight different groups:

Boys Senior:—Kantesh Roy

" School A:—Jagatbandhu Krishnan

" School B:—Ranjit Mitra

" School C:—Harisadhan Mitra

" School D:—Sushen Mitra  
Shakti

Girls: Group A:—Anima Gupta  
Priti Pande

" Group B:—Golap Srivastava

" Group C:—Nilima Gupta.

...

The eighteenth anniversary of Sriniketan was celebrated as usual on Feb. 6.

This year the Hon'ble Khan Bahadur M. Azizul Haque presided over the function and opened the Exhibition and Fair.

At the outset Gurudeva addressed a few words in course of which he observed:

"In the West the difference between education provided in the village and in town lies more in degree and quantity than in quality. Western villagers do not get a cheap substitute condescendingly offered by townsfolk in the name of education. In India however education provided in the villages is not only inadequate but the standard is far below civilized standard. Such disparity lies deep in the very nature of modern Indian education which successfully prevent villages and towns from coming near each other. Rural areas are cut off from the benefits of the modern age without which we cannot claim a rightful place in humanity. Our villages to-day are cheerless, poverty-stricken and isolated from the main currents of creative life. Only through educational reform and equal facilities for everyone we can restore life to the nation."

Gurudeva then discussed the village situation in greater detail indicating practical steps for the amelioration of rural Indian conditions.' He concluded by inviting Khan Bahadur M. Azizul Haque to deliver his address.

The Hon. Khan Bahadur paid a warm tribute to Gurudeva.

"Nothing (he said) but a radical change in our education can meet the situation. The town is giving out text-book lessons to students in an unreal atmosphere alienating them from living contacts with the soil and humanity. Our youth are going through a dehumanizing education and can never successfully adjust themselves to rural life or

serve their countrymen in the villages. They have only filled posts in offices or swelled the ranks of the unemployed. I agree with the Poet in advocating equality of opportunity for the village and the town alike. Real education would make us take up responsibilities in economic, cultural and other spheres. My firm belief is that institutions like Visva-Bharati have already given a clear lead not merely to Bengal but to the whole of India."

The Hon. Khan Bahadur then formally opened the exhibition.

..

On Feb. 7, Rai Bahadur B. B. Sarkar, District Magistrate, Birbhum, presided over a meeting of the Rural Reconstruction and Rural Health Societies. On the day following the annual general meeting of the Visva-Bharati Central Co-operative Bank was held.

..

/ In appreciation of a statement on War drawn up by members of the Society of Friends at a recent conference in Hoshangabad, Gurudeva writes,

"When history suddenly goes wrong with an appalling immensity of human sacrifice we claim from all great religions to send abroad their warning and their call. Unfortunately in such a crisis of collective moral aberration the spiritual man in us is too often persuaded to form either passively or in active agreement an unholy co operation with the power that blindly runs amuck spreading devastation.

There are frenzied occasions when bombs are hurled from the air upon priceless heritages of man shattering them into dust, but the worst of all havocs done to humanity happens when sacred vehicles of life's noble ideals are injured and made inactive by the virulent passion that poisons the atmosphere.

And therefore it gives us an assurance of hope as we meet with an unwavering assertion of faith in humanity such as we find in this paper, the challenge of the Christian ideal so bravely and beautifully uttered urging for peace and justice and resistance to evil force. During a world-wide contamination of violence and hatred we badly need some signs of the triumph of the Divine Spirit dwelling in man, defying the congregated might of malignity."

...

Notable among those who visited the asrama during the month were Sj. Uday Sankar, Sj. Surendranath Maitra, I. E. S. (Rtd.), Sri N. Kanungo, ex-minister, Orissa and Dr. Hadi Hasan. Dr. Hasan, who is the holder of the Chair of Persian Studies in the Aligarh Muslim University, came here on special deputation from his institution on Feb. 20. He delivered a course of three lectures on Islamic subjects, all of which were highly appreciated. Along with Gurudeva we hope that Dr. Hasan will repeat his visit to the asrama in the near future.

...

Performances of Gurudeva's well-known dance-drama 'Chandalika' are to be given in aid of Visva-Bharati, at Midnapore and Bankura towards the last week of February. We have been receiving pressing invitations from both the towns and are assured of enthusiastic response. Gurudeva was present at most of the rehearsals, supervising and directing them with that punctilious personal care which is mainly responsible for the high aesthetic standard set by Santiniketan performances.

...

### Alumni News

Our best wishes go to Lalita Sankar Agnihotri who recently got married to Kumari Saraswati Devi at Allahabad. Lalita Sankar graduated from the Calcutta University in 1937 as a student of the Siksha-Bhavana.

...

Sreemati Rama Sen (nee Gupta) formerly of 'Patha-Bhavana' and 'Siksha-Bhavana' was married to Sjt. Pratulananda Sen in December last.

...

### Obituary

We deeply regret to announce the death of Haribandan Bhatt which took place in December last at Ahmedabad. He was a student of Kalabhavana during the years 1936-'38.

We pray with the bereaved that his soul may rest in peace.

...

We record with deep regret the death of Sjt. Nimai Majumdar an old student of the Santiniketan Vidyalaya, who passed away in a Calcutta hospital in the month of February.

**Erratum.**—Ref. Feb. issue V. B. News: Please read Srimati Renuka Ray B. Sc. Econ. (Lond.) in place of Srimati Lata Ray.

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# VISVA-BHARATI NEWS

Volume VIII

APRIL, 1940

Number X

## Two Letters

The following extract from *Harijan* ( March 2 ) together with Mahatmaji's reply to Gurudeva's letter bearing as they do Gandhiji's impression of his recent visit to the ashram will be of interest to many of our readers

"The visit to Santiniketan was a pilgrimage to me.

Santiniketan is not new to me. I was first there in 1915 when it was yet taking shape, not that it is not doing so even now. Gurudev is himself growing. Old age has made no difference to the elasticity of his mind. Santiniketan will, therefore, never cease to grow so long as Gurudev's spirit broods over it. He is in everyone and everything in Santiniketan. The veneration in which he is held by everyone is uplifting because it is spontaneous. It certainly uplifted.

The title the grateful students and staff gave him accurately describes the position he commands in Santiniketan. He does so because he has lost himself to the place and the congregation. I saw that he was living for his dearest creation Visva-Bharati. He wants it to prosper and to feel sure of its future. He had a long talk about it with me but that was not enough for him, and so, as we parted, he put into my hands the following precious letter:—

*Uttarayan*

19. 2. 40.

Dear Mahatmaji,

You have just had a bird's-eye view this morning of our Visva-Bharati centre of activities. I do not know what estimate you have formed of its merit. You know that though this institution is national in its immediate aspect it is international in its spirit, offering according to the best of its means India's hospitality of culture to the rest of the world.

*At one of its critical moments you have saved it from an utter breakdown and helped it to its legs. We are ever thankful to you for this act of friendliness.*

*And, now, before you take your leave of Santiniketan I make my fervent appeal to you. Accept this institution under your protection, giving it an assurance of permanence if you consider it to be a national asset. Visva-Bharati is like a vessel which is carrying the cargo of my life's best treasure, and I hope it may claim special care from my countrymen for its preservation.*

*With love  
Rabindranath Tagore.*

Who am I to take the institution under my protection ? It carries God's protection because it is the creation of an earnest soul. It is not a show thing. Gurudev himself is international because he is truly national. Therefore all his creation is international and Visva-Bharati is the best of all

I have no doubt whatsoever that Gurudev deserves to be relieved of all anxiety about its future so far as the financial part is concerned. In my reply to his touching appeal I have promised all the assistance I am capable of rendering. This note is the beginning of the effort."

The following is the text of Mahatmaji's reply to Gurudeva's letter :—

*On the way to Calcutta  
19. 2. 40.*

*Dear Guruder,*

*The touching note that you put into my hands as we parted has gone straight into my heart. Of course Visvabharti is a national institution. It is undoubtedly also international. You may depend upon my doing all I can in the common endeavour to assure its permanence.*

*I look to you to keep your promise to sleep religiously for about an hour during the day.*

*Though I have always regarded Santiniketan as my second home, this visit has brought me nearer to it than ever before.*

*With reverence and love,  
Yours  
M.K. Gandhi.*

---

## Needs of Visva-Bharati

Most people possibly do not realise that Visva-Bharati is a registered corporate body under the control of an elected Executive Council and a board of trustees of its own. This public organization, with its numerous departments, its academic, cultural, industrial and rural reconstruction activities remains until this day entirely dependent upon public generosity. This institution to which Gurudeva has devoted so many years of his life and which is the most comprehensive and practical embodiment of his ideals, has to carry on a precarious hand to mouth existence year in and year out. But, in spite of many heavy odds Visva-Bharati has been doing pioneer work in the various fields of education and culture.

Of the various departments of Santiniketan only Kala-Bhavana may be said to be endowed after a fashion. But even this department, considering the great work it is doing under the directorship of Nandalal Bose, is not adequately equipped. The two departments of higher studies and research—Vidya-Bhavana and Cheena-Bhavana under Kshitzimohan Sen and Tan Yun-Shan have been carrying on valuable researches into the cultural and religious history of the East in general and India in particular. With the exception of the Islamic Studies section which is properly provided for by the Nizam Fund earmarked for this section, these two departments look up to annual grants-in-aid. Obviously, unless funds could be capitalised there may be no security for the future of these two valuable departments. It will be very unfortunate if the Cheena-Bhavana with its fine building and valuable library for which capital was liberally subscribed by the Chinese people, its excellent

staff—the only centre of Sino-Indian Culture in India,—has to suffer for lack of funds. It will be doubly unfortunate, for, then it would also indicate a lamentable lack of hospitality on the part of our own country.

It is a strange anomaly that in Santiniketan, which should normally be, above all else, a centre of Bengali culture and learning, there is no Chair for Bengali language and literature. It is a deeply regrettable and shameful gap which we have been trying in vain to fill up for many years now. But no funds are forthcoming for the purpose.

The Hindi-Bhavana for the building of which munificent contributions were made by the Marwari community in Calcutta is languishing for want of a properly equipped library and a host of other requirements. In this connection mention may be made of an article by C. F. Andrews, Upacharya, Visva-Bharati, on the Hiri-Bhavana, which recently appeared in the Calcutta papers.

The two academic departments of Siksha-Bhavana and Patha-Bhavana have no endowments at all and both together run on a deficit to the tune of Rs. 15,000/-at the end of every financial year. This deficit is being met annually from the Visva-Bharati General Fund which can hardly continue to stand this increasing strain on its slender resources.

Regarding the school it should be noted that it was the nucleus round which the whole institution has grown and developed. Started in 1901 as a pioneer movement with its system of holding open-air classes, teaching of languages by the direct method, training of the senses through indoor games and handicraft, development of civic responsibilities by training in self-government it

has already been recognised as a model school, not only in this country but all over the world. There is still room for vast improvement with regard to this department, which, however cannot be made unless adequate capital grants are forth-coming.

The Sikshabhavana—which provides facilities for higher education to a decent number of students coming from practically all the provinces of India has suffered from its very inception for lack of financial support. Though the authorities are very keen on making better arrangements for science teaching, want of funds preclude any such venture.

The Sangit-Bhavana, whose good work the public is familiar with through various performances given by its students from time to time needs at least a lakh of rupees to consolidate its position and function properly. It may be noted in this connection that the Sangit-Bhavana of Santiniketan has been doing valuable work in synthetising various music and dance forms of the different provinces of India. It has given what may be called the earnest of a new era by the high standard of its dramatic performances, excellent and authentic rendering of Gurudeva's songs, and revival of dance—no little achievement for a pioneer institution.

The Visva-Bharati Library has one of the largest and finest collections of valuable books. What little endowment the Library has is not sufficient for its needs the most crying of which is proper accommodation. For want of room a unique collection of books, gifts from various nations, are now cramped together in an inadequate space—a tragedy to be regretted by all genuine lovers of books.

The rural reconstruction activities which Visva-Bharati has taken up in the villages surrounding Sriniketan are already yielding

substantial results. Our efforts at improving educational, industrial, sanitary and other conditions in rural areas would make much more rapid progress with the support of the public. It is regrettable that this institution, the only one of its kind in India, which has consistently devoted 17 years to ameliorating the conditions of living in the rural areas of West Bengal, should have to depend for its support on an annual grant from outside India.

Besides those that have been indicated already there are other basic needs—essential for a residential University like Visva-Bharati. Some of these are a properly equipped gymnasium, proper residential quarters for the members of the staff, improvement in the supply of water, improvement in the present insufficient and inadequate General Kitchen, improvement of salary conditions and a host of other requirements.

It is Gurudeva's intimate desire that the idealists, creative artists and educationists who are at present devoting their entire energy towards the shaping of a new generation, should be able to fulfil their mission in a congenial atmosphere. As long as that condition is not achieved, as long as a suitable financial foundation is not laid to rear up the evergrowing structure of Visva-Bharati, so long Gurudeva will continue to have his misgivings. Ever since the founding of Visva-Bharati he has spared no pains to make the institution a meeting-place for the best intellects of the world. "Where the whole world would find a shelter" ( यत्र विश्वं भवत्प्रेक्षनीहम् )—this has been the motto of Visva-Bharati. It invites collaboration of writers, scholars and artists of different countries, who, through a disinterested pursuit of knowledge or creation or contemplation of beauty, are adding to the cultural heritage of man.

## IN MEMORIAM

As the News was being despatched information reached us that our Upacharya C. F. Andrews passed away peacefully in the early hours of the morning on April 5 at the Riordan Nursing Home, Calcutta.

Following a simple yet impressive service at the St. Paul's Cathedral the cortege, followed by hundreds of people, was taken to the Lower Circular Road Cemetery where the remains were interred. The Most Reverend Dr. Ross Westcott, Lord Bishop of Calcutta and Metropolitan of India, officiated at the Service and also performed the last rites at the graveside. The Lord Bishop was one of Andrews' oldest friends. Mahatma Gandhi was represented at the funeral by Sri Mahadev Desai, his Secretary, and Gurudeva was represented by Rathindranath Tagore.

On the eve of his second operation C. F. Andrews dictated the following message to Amiya Chakravarty and asked him to hand it over to Gurudeva if anything should happen to him :—

During these days of waiting since the decision was taken that I should have this operation, my thoughts have all the while been with God and I know that whatever happens His will will be done. Everyday I have been praying the prayer : Thy Will Be Done. I have been wonderfully helped in thus keeping *Shanti* by thoughts of Gurudeva and all I have learnt at Santiniketan ; also by Mahatma Gandhi and what I have learnt from him all these past years. Above all, from the loving spiritual visits in the hospital, from day to day, of the Metropolitan whose Christian faith has marvellously sustained me through all these days of very great suffering and bodily weakness. He has become in these days dearer to me than ever he was before. I have found how absolutely his heart is one with mine in his love for India and for all the world.

God has given me in my life the greatest of all gifts—namely, the gift of loving friends. At this moment when I am laying my life in His hands, I would like to acknowledge again what I have acknowledged in my books—this supreme gift of friendship, both in India and in other parts of the world. For, while I have written so far about those who are near me here in India I have been all the while equally conscious of the supreme loving friends in my own dear land of England whose spiritual help I have been receiving along with constant letters and telegrams. I have also had the same spiritual help from friends who have remembered me in other parts of the world.

While I have been lying in the hospital I trust that my prayers and hopes have not been merely concerning my own sufferings which are of the smallest importance today in the light of the supreme suffering of the whole human race. I have prayed every moment that God's kingdom may come and His will may be done on Earth as it is always being done in Heaven.

( Sd. ) Charlie Andrews.

30/3/40.

In April, 1914, C. F. Andrews came here to finally dedicate himself to Gurudeva's work. On that occasion he was given a reception by the ashrama where Gurudeva recited a poem especially composed to welcome the guest.

Gurudeva's own translation of the poem is given below :—

From the shrine of the West  
you have brought us living water,  
we welcome you, friend.  
The East has offered you  
her garland of love,  
accept it and welcome, friend.  
Your love has opened  
the door of our heart,  
enter and welcome, friend.  
You have come to us  
as a gift of the Lord,  
we bow to Him, friend.

During the Service at the St. Paul's Psalm 23 was chanted. The text of the Psalm is given below :—

The Lord is my shepherd ; I shall not want.  
He maketh me to lie down in green pastures : he leadeth me beside the still waters.  
He restoreth my soul : he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil : for thou art with me ; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies : thou anointest my head with oil ; my cup runneth over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life : and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

---

J  
The passing away of our Upacharya C. F. Andrews plunged the whole ashrama into the deepest gloom. In the afternoon of April 5 a memorial service was held in the Mandir. Gurudeva addressed the congregation.

A short summary of the address is given below :—

"At this moment the mortal remains of our beloved friend Andrews mingle with the dust. However much we may say that the soul is immortal and transcends death, still the frail mind knows no peace. The very thought that our everyday exchange of love and affection will cease eternally in its physical worldly form, aches the heart.

Andrews came out to India in the days of her strenuous political struggle. Once he was convinced of the justice of Indian aspirations, his Christian faith and charity led him immediately to take up the cause of the oppressed and the lowliest in the face of ridicule and active opposition from his own countrymen. We must clearly realise it is one thing to sacrifice oneself for one's own motherland, the inspiration being common and usual, it is quite another to sacrifice oneself to the cause of a foreign land. To recognise the common bond of the human soul, an infinite resource of love and inspiration is needed. And this he had in an ample measure. This large humanitarian spirit imbibed from Christ's religion of love made him a true Christian. In no one man have I seen such triumph of Christianity. I was fortunate in having Andrews for an intimate friend. There are people bound to us by ties of necessity whom we can replace but his is an irreparable loss.

Here in Visva-Bharati where I have laid the foundation for a world fellowship, it was my privilege to have him as a worker for the cause. That he loved India was the least part of his greatness. He was truly great because he loved humanity. Although we cannot but feel a personal loss involved by his death, we must not lose sight of the fact that his loss is as much to the world as to our ashrama.

But beyond this sense of regret let our faith arise clear and strong that his deathless contributions will endure the onslaughts of time. Vindicating the meek and befriending them was a great heroic task which he performed and that will abide as long as love abides.

Though the loss is great, we should not lose ourselves in vain dejection. We should rather consider ourselves fortunate that he chose to dedicate himself to Visva-Bharati. His sacrifice, the complete surrender of his self, will ever remain treasured in our heart. I do not know if the voices from the mortal world reach him anymore, still I avail myself of this opportunity, in spite of my failing health, to say to my dearest friend that I am eternally grateful to him. I take this occasion also to express my solemn conviction that the gift of Andrews' dedicated spirit in the cause of humanity will remain for ever. Death cannot destroy nor time take away the merit of his selfless sacrifice."

---

## Santiniketan and Sriniketan

Excepting for the three days towards the beginning of March when he went on a visit to Bankura, Gurudeva spent the most part of the month in the asrama.

In spite of his age and failing health Gurudeva seems to have stood the strain of his Bankura trip quite well. He not only undertook a long and strenuous motor trip from Khana Junction to Bankura but also accepted three different public engagements in course of as many days. He performed the opening ceremony of the Bankura Exhibition, laid the foundation of a Maternity and Child-Welfare Centre, attended a reception given in his honour and visited the local Medical School.

This was Gurudeva's first visit to Bankura and the whole town welcomed this occasion to give him an enthusiastic welcome. All possible arrangements for his health and comfort were made by his hosts Mr. & Mrs. Sudhindra Kumar Haldar.

...

Grave anxiety is felt here on account of a serious set-back in our Upacharya C. F. Andrews' condition. He was removed a few days ago from the Presidency General Hospital to a private nursing home where a second operation so long deferred was performed successfully. The operation was undertaken on March 31 and since then we have been receiving telegraphic messages bearing upon his condition. Earlier reports were definitely reassuring, but later on there was a critical turn due mostly to his general weakness and advanced age. We hope and pray that he might be given the strength to go through the crisis successfully.

Prayers were offered both at Santiniketan

and Sriniketan for his early recovery. May he be long spared to us and to the world.

...

The most notable event of the month in review was the celebration of the birth centenary of Borodada—the late Dwijendranath Tagore.

Gurudeva conducted a special mandir service on the occasion and later a memorial meeting was held at Nichu-Bangla which has been rechristened under the name of Dwija Viram. At the meeting the following message from Mahatma Gandhi was read out :

"All Santiniketan knows or should know what relations subsisted between Borodada and me. It was a deeply spiritual bond. Death has not dissolved it. It should therefore be taken for granted that I shall be with you all in spirit at the forthcoming function at Santiniketan."

On the occasion of the centenary the 'Chaitra' issue ( 1846 B. S. ) of *Prabasi* has brought out a highly interesting Dwijendranath commemoration number

...

We had the pleasure of having with us the Raja Saheb of Awagarh and family and His Highness the Maharaja of Surguja ( Eastern States Agency ) who came here for a brief stay. We are gratified to learn that an Awagarh House is under construction. Before long we hope to see the Raja Saheb as one of the permanent residents of the asrama which he has materially helped to foster.

...

The Librarian, Visva Bharati Library, announces with pleasure that our Library is receiving regular supplies of official journals and other publications from various provincial governments and Indian states. Some of their valuable publications have recently been received from the India Office and Imperial Library. The Library has been further enriched by securing a full set of the Encyclopaedia Britannica (latest edition) which has been transferred from the personal library of the Founder-President.

...

Amongst our routine activities in the month of March the following may be mentioned. The twentyfifth anniversary of the Gandhi Day came off on March 10 and scenes of keen enthusiasm were seen all around the ashrama. Anticipating a rush of Easter holiday makers we thought it fit to postpone the annual Spring festival, usually held in the ashrama on the Dol-purnima Day. The festival was this year held on March 27 at Sinha-Sadan. A quiet but impressive programme was gone through with Gurudeva participating and reciting some of his own poems.

The deluge at Raingarh was followed immediately after by a deluge of visitors at Santiniketan. Many visitors on their way back home from Mazarpuri, called at Santiniketan for a day or two. As most of them came without giving any intimation whatsoever our Guest-House staff were put in a very embarrassing position indeed. The-unannounced-visitors'-problem is engaging a great deal of our authorities' attention. It is believed they contemplate adopting drastic measures to maintain peace at Santiniketan.

...

Busy activities marked the month at Kala-Bhavana. No less than three exhibitions of woodcuts, lino-cuts and paintings were held at the Kalabhabana Museum during March. Brisk fresco-painting is in progress at *Dinantiku*—the teachers' tea-club.

...

Notable among those who visited the ashrama during the month were Sir Mirza Ismail, Dewan of Mysore, Sri H. V. Kamath, Dr. and Mrs A. Lakshmi pati, Mr. Kodanda Rao, Secretary, Servants of India Society and Lady Ramarau, wife of the Indian Agent in South Africa. Lady Ramarau gave a highly interesting talk on the problem of Indian Settlers in South Africa.

...

A party of twenty students and teachers under training at Siksha-Satra and Siksha-Charcha left on March 28 on an educational tour. They will visit the important historical sites of Northern India at Benares, Agra, Delhi and such other places. Adhyapaka Tarak Chandra Dhar is in charge of the party.

...

Towards the beginning of March performances of Chitrangada and Chandalika were given in the three moffussil towns of Bankura, Midnapore and Asansol by the students of the Sangit-Bhavana. The response received was up to satisfaction. We are considering if we should not repeat the experiment and thus establish contact with the outlying towns of the province.

...

The boiling heat of sultry summer days will no more be able to scare us at Santiniketan and Sriniketan. To the many amenities of life in the ashrama, day and night electrical

service is going to be added in a few months' time. The contract has already been signed and a company styled as Santiniketan Electric Supply Company Limited has already been floated.

...

The problem of accommodation of students, which has been assuming alarming proportions due mostly to a big rush for admissions will now be partially solved

A separate wing attached to the ground floor of the Sree-Bhavana is now complete. Two commodious dormitories have already been occupied by the students of the Patha-Bhavana. The Sangit Bhavana has its own hostel with a fairly large number of seats and the Kala-Bhavana has now been provided

with an extra working room for a number of its students.

• The ashrama will celebrate Gurudeva's eightieth birthday on the first day of Vaisakh. As our summer recess begins about that time, it has been found convenient to make a slight adjustment as to date of the birthday celebrations. We understand that, as in the previous years, the authorities of the All India Radio are preparing an elaborate broadcasting programme to mark the occasion.

Our summer recess begins on April 24. The institution reopens on July 1.

...

## Alumni News

Members of the Alumni Association are requested to take notice of the fact that the Calcutta office of the Ashramika Sangha has been transferred from 210 Cornwallis Street to 6 Dwarkanath Tagore Lane with effect from February 16.

...

We are glad to record the following new

names in the list of life members of the Ashramika Sangha :

Anath Nath Bose, Arunkanti Bose, Ajindra Nath Tagore, Amita Tagore, Arundhati Ghose, Bhupendra Nath Poddar, Govindlal Makar, Rama Sen, Sushil Kumar Chakravarty and W. M. Bhandare.

...

## RABINDRA RACHANA VALI

( Complete Collected Bengali Works of Rabindranath Tagore )

The Visva-Bharati Publishing Department has arranged for the editing and publication of a complete collection of the Bengali writings of Rabindranath. It is expected the Edition will be completed in about 25 volumes ; four or five volumes to be published in a year. The books will be illustrated with topical photographs, tables, etc.

The first volume is already in the market.

Price per volume Rs. 4/8/-, ( paper cover ) & Rs. 5/8/-, Rs. 6/8/-, ( leatherette binding ).

A limited number of a De-luxe edition autographed by the Poet will be available at Rs. 10/- a volume.

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For other sizes, please enquire.

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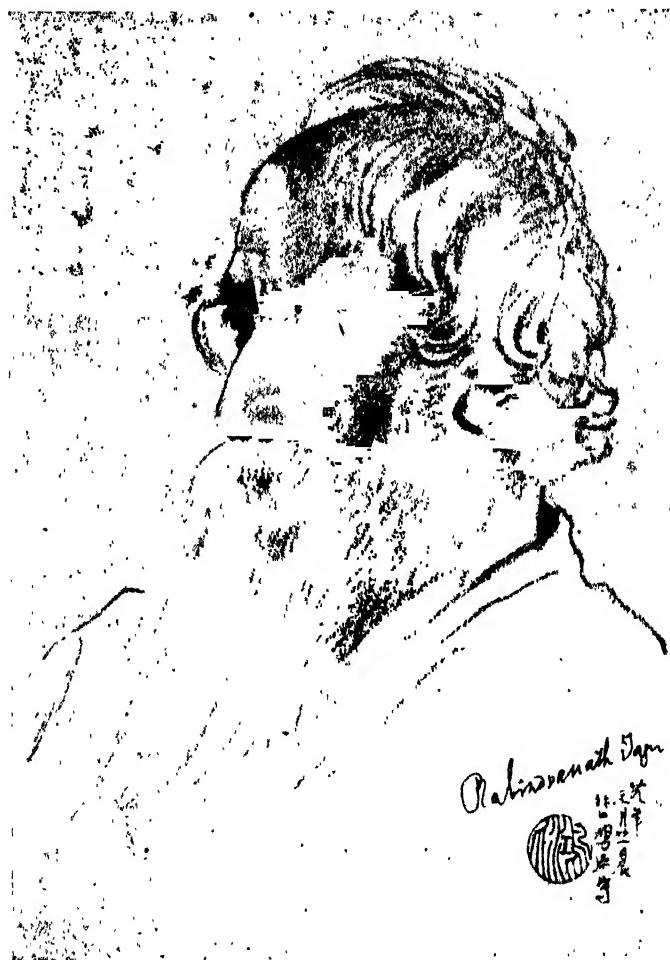
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# VISVA-BHARATI NEWS

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MAY, 1940

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A portrait-study of Gurudeva by Ju Péon.  
Reproduced from the *Visva-Bharati Quarterly*,  
Vol. V, part IV.

## Messages from China

Gurudeva has received the following congratulatory message from Marshal Chiang Kai-Shek :—

✓ As the smaller hills look up to the snowy height of the sacred peak and as all the rivers flow towards the vast deep, even like that do the whole world look up to you and bow to you. On the auspicious occasion of the celebration of your eightieth birthday I take this opportunity to respectfully convey to you my heartiest and warmest congratulations. In wishing you good health and long life I pray that you may be spared to humanity for many more years to come, so that you may spread over ever-widening areas of the world the benign influence of your love of peace and fellowship and propagate your noble ideas in the fields of education and culture. May you hold up a beacon-light to this benighted suffering world for ever and ever.

Mr. Chen Li-Fu, Education Minister of China, has sent the following Chinese poem of his own composition. The poem has been rendered into English by Marjorie Sykes :—

On this auspicious day shall Tien-Chu ( India )  
Rejoicing hail your eighty years of life,  
In youth and strength of spirit blessed still.  
As the Lord Buddha chanted, so we pray,  
“Measureless may your life be,” for your heart  
Holds all humanity in its large embrace.

Sprung from the same deep root in ancient times  
China and India stand : now late in time  
You come to show to each its brother's glory,  
Each unto each his greatness, wisdom, wealth.  
No task is this for common souls ; your place  
Is with the Prophets and the Lords of men  
Whose visiting shines amid our desert world  
As pure gems in the Ganges' numberless sands.

Dr. H. H. Kung, President of the Legislative Yuan, sent the following cablegram :—

“On the celebration of your eightieth birthday please accept my hearty congratulations. We in China appreciate your valuable contribution to the spiritual civilization of Oriental peoples and wish you and your people every happiness and prosperity.

Besides the above, messages were also received from Venerable Tai Hsu of the Chinese Buddhist Mission, from the Consul General of China in Calcutta, and from various other friends and well-wishers of Gurudeva.

## Rabindranath Tagore\*

C. F. Andrews

What is it that makes the true greatness of a poet of world repute such as Tagore? What is the mysterious creative force that throws up from the mass a single genius among mankind, able to touch the hearts of millions of people? What is this still greater mystery that the most universal of all the poets, among whom we may surely rank Rabindranath Tagore, are able to go on doing this for hundreds of years and also to reach at the same time all the races of mankind?

I would like to face with you the riddle of his mysterious universe of sound and speech, of music and song. Perhaps I can best do so by telling the story, how I first met Rabindranath Tagore in London, nearly 30 years ago, and how from that first meeting some new thing came into my life which can never be taken away, I have related the story before, and even though some may have read what I have written about it, they will like to hear it again.

Tagore had come once more to the West after thirty years, and had gone to live in Hampstead. It was nearly mid-summer, and I had endeavoured eagerly to find him at his house in Hampstead but had come away disappointed. Then by accident I met H. W. Nevinson the author, who was my friend. "Hallo!" he said to me, "What makes you here in London?" I told him of my very great disappointment at not being able to see Tagore, who was not at home when I called. "Come back and dine with me," said Nevinson, "and we'll go together after dinner to Rothenstein's house, where you are sure

to find him. For Yeats, the Irish poet, is going to recite some of Tagore's own translations of his poems in manuscript and Tagore will be there himself".

So, after we had dined, we walked across to Rothenstein's house, which was on the edge of Hampstead Heath. There I saw Rabindranath Tagore for the first time. He had come to England for reasons of health; already he had been warned by the doctor that he would have to undergo a very serious operation. He was just fifty years old, and his hair and beard were beginning to turn grey for he had suffered much. I had never seen his wonderfully beautiful face before, and I remember how I was overcome with reverence when Mr. Rothenstein introduced me to him. He looked very frail indeed on account of his recent illness. He was evidently much embarrassed by the people who crowded round him for they were all strangers to him and to his country. But when he knew who I was he put me at my ease at once. All his shyness left him as he talked to me about Santiniketan and he gave me a pressing invitation to visit his Asram as his guest.

Then Yeats began to read poems from the manuscript of *Gitanjali*, some of his own favourites among Tagore's poems. One of them, which also is published, I believe, in the *Crescent Moon*, is my own favourite. It reveals most of all that mystery of the beauty of words about which I have just spoken.

"On the sea-shore of endless worlds children meet".

---

\* Adapted from a broadcast talk recorded sometime ago. By courtesy of the All-India-Radio.—Ed.

After he had ended his recitation, Yeats told us how he had carried this manuscript of *Gitanjali* about with him day after day, and had hardly been able to put it down, because the music and the rhythm of its perfect English had haunted him so much.

While Yeats was reciting these poems I watched Tagore from time to time at a distance. He seemed to be almost shrinking away into a corner, while Yeats lavished his praises upon him. Evidently he found it hard to believe all the kind things that Yeats was saying about him.

When all the reading was over, and most of the guests had departed, then at last I had an opportunity and was able to go up alone and pay him my homage from the very depth of my heart, though words could hardly be found to express it. The obvious sincerity of my emotion touched him deeply, and he gladly made an appointment with me to meet him on the very next day. My cup of joy was full and brimming over as I said good night. So, after leaving Nevinson at his own home, I went out on to Hampstead Heath.

It was the night just after the full moon, if I remember rightly. There was a cloudless English summer sky, slightly tinged with mist along the low horizon. Sunset lingered on quite late in those northern latitudes, and the glorious moon began to rise higher and higher as I walked silently alone across the heath. It was for me an hour of enchanting beauty, for my mind kept brooding over the memory of those musical words of Tagore, which I had just heard.

"On the seashore of endless worlds, children meet." "On the seashore of endless worlds, is the great meeting of children."

In this way, I kept repeating them to myself, and as I did so I could picture Tagore's shrinking figure while he listened to Yeats' recitation; and then again I would repeat the words, "On the seashore of endless worlds, is the great meeting of children".

It seemed almost as if, on that evening, I had been permitted to open a door and enter another world of hitherto undiscovered

beauty. The magic of it all was enhanced by the silence of the night and the moonlit heath and the vastness of the open sky.

Perhaps in some such way as that,—through close personal touch with Nature,—Tagore's hauntingly beautiful poems can best be read aloud or sung to music. When, at Purnima, on the night of the full moon, at Santiniketan, we go out into the wide open spaces outside the Asram, with here and there a palm tree in the distance, we get the atmosphere that is needed. There, as we sit in a group together and remain silent, at last some beautiful voice of a singer will break through the stillness and in this way we can make to listen worthily to the poet's songs. At such a time, my mind goes back to that momentous occasion in my own life when I first met Gurudev at Hampstead, and went out alone from his presence into the dusk of that summer evening while the great moon was rising and filling the air with its mysterious beauty.

Since then I have wondered and wondered so often about the hidden secret of it all! Are these moments of rapture, when we are carried out of our normal selves, merely a waking dream, which the poet creates for us out of words and music, to soothe for a moment the world's pain, which otherwise would be too great for us to bear? Or are they the Reality, the *Satya*, the Truth of Life? The very essence of Existence?

To put this intriguing thought in other words,—are these times of vision, such as I have described, the great supreme moments of our mortal state, when the Eternal breaks through the Time process and reveals to us in a flash the real truth that lies beyond our outward ken? Or are they merely *Maya*, Illusion,—a gossamer web of magic fancy, so finely and delicately drawn that our human imaginations are caught in its meshes for a brief spell and then released?

My own positive belief is this, that the former of these two views is correct; that the poet, the seer, the artist, the musician are the true prophets of Humanity, who gaze into those very realms, where, after this body is laid in the dust, our spirits shall live for ever.

## BIRTHDAY\*

Pity the poor man,  
 caught in the storm of strident applause,  
 enmeshed in the web  
 of a thousand prying eyes.  
 Give him a little nook  
 amongst the happy obscure ones  
 —oblivious of their birthdays

The delirious crowd  
 hedges around him  
 like a wall,  
 rudely isolating him from the nameless many.  
 Fame, like a clanging chain,  
 makes of him a prisoner.

Poor man : he is daubed with many colours,  
 and see, where he is held aloft  
 on a brazen platform,  
 where shameless fingers point at him,  
 day and night.

Poor man, he cannot take cover,  
 he has nowhere to hide himself.

Why not let him alone  
 in his own solitary world,  
 where flickering light and sombre shade  
 intermingle in endless patterns,  
 where the eternal child lies frolicking  
 in the vast stretch of sands ?

*Rabindranath Tagore*

---

\* Translated from the original Bengali by Kshitis Roy and reproduced from Vol. VI, Part I, *Visva-Bharati Quarterly*.—Ed.

## Santiniketan and Sriniketan

In the evening of April 14, on the first day of the Bengali New Year, the ashrama celebrated the 79th birthday of Gurudeva. The ceremony was simple and impressive. Long before Gurudeva arrived visitors and inmates gathered together in the *Amra Kunja* which was tastefully decorated on the occasion.

On arrival Gurudeva was greeted with propitious Vedic hymns and prayers were offered for his long life, health and prosperity. After this Gurudeva gave readings from his own drama *Arupratan* (King of the Dark Chamber), and for a whole hour and a half kept his audience spell-bound by the magic charm of his voice. He made the whole drama living and real, with characters, dialogue, and situations unfolding themselves into a harmonious pattern until the solemn grandeur of the final scene was reached.

At the conclusion of the ceremony the inmates and visitors were treated to a sumptuous feast for which money had been donated by His Highness the Maharaja of Surguja.

...

Gurudeva conducted the *Navavarsa* service at the Mandir this year. In his address he re-enunciated his faith that though for the present the forces of evil might seem to triumph, the time was not far away when righteousness would reclaim itself. He further remarked that the nightmare of horror and bloodshed was sure to give way ultimately to the forces of goodness and truth. He also took the occasion to remind the workers of Visva-Bharati to scrupulously follow the ideals he had set before them, exhorting them at the same time

to bring about a harmony between intellect and service, ideals and organization.

...

Students of the different departments of Visva-Bharati presented Gurudeva with various articles made by their own hands as token of their love and respect on the occasion of his birthday. The *Dinantika* frescoes were completed in time for marking the occasion and an exhibition of the Kalabhavana collection of paintings, together with paintings of Ramendranath Chakravarty, our ex-student, was held at the same time. A clay bust of Gurudeva, cast in cement, made by Rabindranath Tagore, has been presented by him to the ashrama on the occasion of the birthday celebrations.

...

Gurudeva left for Calcutta on April 17. During his 3 days' stay in Calcutta he opened the new offices and showroom of the Calcutta Builders Store at the Trust House. He also paid a visit to the studio of Sj. Jamini Roy.

Gurudeva left for Mangpu on April 20. As in the last year he will stay as the guest of Dr. and Mrs. M. Sen.

...

Our former Upacharya C. C. Dutt, was in residence here for about a week. His periodical visits, though they are few and between, are eagerly awaited by his many friends and admirers here. We hope he will repeat his visit in the near future for a longer stay.

...

We regret to announce the resignation of Christina Bossenec. She came out as Lady-Superintendent of Sree-Bhavana in 1935. She leaves behind her an uniformly brilliant

record of service and it will be very difficult indeed to replace her. We take this opportunity to express our deepest condolence at the loss of her mother. Our condolence is also due to Marjorie Sykes in her recent bereavement.

...

Among the prominent visitors whom we had the pleasure of having with us during the month of April may be mentioned Sjt. Ramananda Chatterjee, Prof. Surendranath Maitra, I. E. S. ( Retd. ), Mr. Roger Hicks of the Oxford Group and Mr. Raghbir Singh who brought with him a party of students from the Modern High School, New Delhi, to visit the ashrama.

...

A plot has been laid out by the side of the Samavaya Bhandar for the building of a Science Laboratory. For a long time we have been feeling the need of an up-to-date Laboratory for our Science-students. Extension is also contemplated of the Library premises.

...

Of late Sriniketan has been increasing its sphere of activities in various directions. A maternity clinic has been opened for ministering to the needs of surrounding villages where Visva-Bharati is carrying on rural reconstruction work. The afforestation scheme, long contemplated by Sriniketan authorities, will be put into operation during the coming monsoon season.

...

A few cases of measles broke out in the ashrama during the month of March. The spread of the disease was effectively checked by timely segregation. We announce with very great pleasure that a segregation ward

is shortly to be erected within the hospital premises. The ward is to be named after Nitindra Ganguly ( Gurudeva's only grandson, who passed away in Germany in 1932 ) and is to be built with the money donated by his father.

...

We earnestly pray for the early recovery and full restoration to health of Sir Nilratan Sirkar and Sj. Surendranath Tagore, both trustees of Visva-Bharati.

...

One of the many urban advantages that is shortly going to be added to the existing amenities of our ashrama will be the introduction of the Trunk-Telephone system. It has received sanction of the Indian Posts and Telegraphs Department and the work has already been taken up by the provincial authorities.

...

An interesting exhibition of handiworks of the children of the lower and middle forms of the Patha-Bhavana attending the carpentry, weaving, drawing and painting classes, was held at the end of the term.

...

Gurudeva has received a number of messages of condolence from many friends of C. F. Andrews all over the world. Their sympathy has touched him deeply and Gurudeva regrets it is not possible for him to acknowledge the messages individually. Copies of the messages are being sent to Andrews' sisters in England.

We intend to bring out a special Andrews-Memorial Number as the June-issue of the Visva-Bharati News.

..

## RABINDRA RACHANAVALI

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The Visva-Bharati Publishing Department has arranged for the editing and publication of a complete collection of the Bengali writings of Rabindranath. It is expected the Edition will be completed in about 25 volumes ; four or five volumes to be published in a year. The books will be illustrated with topical photographs, tables, etc.

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# VISVA-BHARATI NEWS

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JUNE, 1940

Number XII



C. F. Andrews  
Sketch by Rani Chanda  
By courtesy of the *Modern Review* )

### Tribute From Mahatmaji

In the death of C. F. Andrews not only India but humanity has lost a true son and servant. And yet his death is a deliverance from pain and fulfilment of his mission on this earth. He will live through those thousands who have enriched themselves by personal contact or contact with his writings. In my opinion Charlie Andrews was one of the greatest and best Englishmen. And because he was a good son of England he became also a son of India. And he did it all for the sake of humanity and for his Lord and Master Jesus Christ. I have not known a better man or a better Christian than C. F. Andrews. India bestowed on him the title of *Dinabandhu*. He deserved it because he was a true friend of the poor and down trodden in all climes.

Nobody probably knew Charlie Andrews as well as I did. Gurudev was Guru to him. When we met in South Africa, we simply met as brothers and remained as such to the end. There was no distance between us. It was not friendship between an Englishman and an Indian. It was an unbreakable bond between two seekers and servants. But I am not giving my reminiscences of Andrews sacred as they are.

I want Englishmen and Indians whilst the memory of the death of this servant of England and India is still fresh to give thought to the legacy he has left for us both. There is no doubt about his love for England being equal to that of the tallest of Englishmen, nor can there be any doubt of his love for India being equal to that of the tallest of Indians. Yes, he did say on his bed from which he was never to rise, "Mohan, Swaraj is coming. Both Englishmen and Indians can make it come if they will." Andrews was no stranger to the present rulers and most Englishmen whose opinion carries weight. He was known to every politically minded Indian.

At the present moment I do not wish to think of English misdeeds. They may all be forgotten, but not one of the heroic deeds of Andrews will be forgotten so long as England and India live. If we really love Andrews' memory, we may not have hate in us for Englishmen, for Andrews was among the best and the noblest. It is possible for the best Englishmen and the best Indians to meet together and never to separate till they have evolved a formula acceptable to both. The legacy left by Andrews is worth the effort. That is the thought that rules me, whilst I contemplate the benign face of Andrews and what innumerable deeds of love he performed so that India may take her independent place among the nations of the world.

---

## Lord Bishop on Charlie Andrews

The Metropolitan of India gave the following broadcast talk on Charlie Andrews on April 5 :—

As I think of Charles Freer Andrews, who has to-day been taken from our midst, David's memorable words upon hearing the news of Abner's death come into my mind, "Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel." He mourned the death of the leader of the military forces while we mourn the passing from our midst of one who was indeed a true Prince among men, whose greatness lay in his splendid achievements as a peace-maker, not as a military chief.

To our shame we own the strength of racial prejudice with which many Europeans have regarded the peoples of the East. A sense of the essential superiority of the white man, over his darker neighbour, has been one of the strongest divisive forces between East and West. In Charlie Andrews no vestige of this feeling ever found any place in his relation with the people of this country to which he came out some 34 years ago. To him all men were the children of the one heavenly Father, whose love included all without distinction, and the opening words of the lord's prayer were to him intensely real as he acknowledged his kinship with men of every race or language. We hail him to day as one who in his own life loved his neighbour as himself and displayed those qualities of humility and meekness which make the true peace-maker breaking down the barriers of racial and social prejudice. Surely, it is a fact of supreme significance that India's two greatest men of

modern times, Dr. Rabindranath Tagore and Mahatma Gandhi, have found in Charlie Andrews the devoted friend and eager co-operator in their efforts to promote unity.

This trait was manifested in that sympathetic understanding which he displayed in regard to the customs and ways of the peoples among whom he lived and worked. We know how easily our own upbringing and traditions tend to warp our mind when we are brought face to face with ways and customs which are strange to us and seem sometimes uncouth. He had a wonderful way of getting beneath the surface of things and discovering in the sources from which they had been derived, something which made them intelligible and frequently revealed in them a purpose of good which time had dimmed, but which might be recovered and readjusted to changed conditions. His own upbringing had trained him to take this sympathetic outlook on life. He was a member of a family which numbered thirteen and in the give-and take of family life, he had developed the humanities which served him in such good stead in his intercourse with peoples of many races.

A man of more than average ability, having been both a scholar and Fellow of Pembroke College, Cambridge, he brought to bear upon the problems which confronted him in the course of his championing the cause of those whom he felt to have been wronged, a keen intellect, but it was his largeness of heart and breadth of affection which was his outstanding characteristic, and there were occasions on which he

allowed his natural sympathy to lead him to a decision which a fuller knowledge of the facts sometimes revealed to be unwarranted. But when he had fallen into such an error his natural honesty made him anxious to acknowledge his fault and make such amends as were open to him. He was a man of outstanding moral courage. His opinions did not always commend him to those whose actions he was challenging, but fearlessly and undeterred by threats, which on occasion were translated into violence, he witnessed to the truth, and strove for the removal of the injustice which he exposed.

India was the land of his adoption and it was the cause of oppressed Indians that he especially championed. Africa was the first field he visited where he made his own the cause of those who in the first instance had been recruited from India for the sugar industry in that country, and had by their thrift and industry acquired for themselves a position which threatened vested interests. Denied all rights of citizenship, their cause was taken up by Mahatma Gandhi, who found in C. F. Andrews a kindred spirit and a loyal fellow helper. I recall hearing how in those early days he won over a leading newspaper of Cape Town by the convincing reasonableness with which he presented his case, as later Sir Srinivas Shastri, the first High Commissioner for India in Africa, won the unstinted admiration and attention of those who had denied both to Indians in the past.

Mr. Andrews paid repeated visits to

Africa in this cause, and in General Smuts he found a statesman more open to the appeal of justice and righteousness than is sometimes the case.

But not to Africa alone did his love for the down-trodden and oppressed Indian lead him. Kenya, British Guiana and Fiji were visited, and wherever he went he won the affection of those he sought to help. He had learnt the secret of winning those whose minds have been warped and embittered by the hardness of their lot. 'It is not enough to give them things, you must give them yourself,' said Mr. John Meakins, a kindred spirit like C. F. Andrews, who has now entered into rest. Andrews gave himself wholly to those whom he sought to serve, he held back nothing, and in doing so he has won a responsive affection which is the only reward he coveted.

Talking with him over his life, just a week ago, he was saying that the question he kept asking himself was whether he had been absolutely loyal to Christ, his Lord and Saviour. And he said, "I find comfort in recalling that it was a Hindu who said that he saw in my initials, C. F. A., the title he gave me, 'Christ's Faithful Apostle'. I, for one, have seen in him one who seemed to me, to reveal as very few do the character of the Master whom he sought to love and serve. If all of us Europeans had lived as near to Christ as Charlie Andrews, we too should have won the same unstinted affection that is his meed.

## Andrews on India's Independence

The following New Year's Day message is perhaps Andrews' last utterance of public importance. The fervent hope expressed in these lines recalls to our minds the pamphlet he wrote in 1920 advocating independence for India.

The message is as follows:—

"I have a hope that India will win her freedom during the year 1940. It is very long overdue ; and now all the world events, as far as I can read them, point in the same direction towards Indian freedom. Great Britain's own best instincts as well as her own best interests are both strongly combining at last to overcome that fatal deadlock in England, which stood in the way of progress in 1935. For while the Anglo-Saxon mind is slow in its logical thinking, it is quick in grasping a point when practical results are at stake ; and today Britain's case before the world will be enormously strengthened if Indian freedom is not merely a promise but a performance."

...

The following excerpt from the pamphlet mentioned will be of interest to our readers:—

"Thus I came to realise, by the force of sheer practical experience, that the process of passive acceptance of gifts from England could not be relied on. Such an evolutionary process did not evolve, it only wandered round and round in a vicious circle, from which there was no escape. It, therefore, appeared to me more and more certain that the only way of self-recovery was through some vital upheaval from within. The explosive force needed for such an upheaval must be generated within the soul of India itself. It could not come through loans and gifts and grants and concessions and proclamations from without. It must come from within.

"Therefore, it was with the intense joy of mental and spiritual deliverance from an intolerable burden that I watched the actual outbreak of such an explosive force as that which actually occurred when Mahatma Gandhi spoke to the heart of India the mantram,—'Be Free ! Be slave no more !' And the heart of India responded. In a sudden moment her fetters began to be loosened, and the pathway of freedom was opened."

---

## My Life Story\*

C. F. Andrews

I was born in Carlisle on February 12, 1871, but my early days were spent in Newcastle-on-Tyne. My mother was related by family tradition to the Highlands of Scotland, and my father came from the Eastern counties of England, so that I have in my vein both Celtic and Anglo-Saxon blood.

We were a very large family of fourteen children, and one of the happiest households in the world. My father was a clergyman, an idealist, and almost indifferent to human affairs. My mother had to economise and she had a very hard struggle bringing up the family.

My whole adult school life was spent at King Edward VII. School, Birmingham, which had the great tradition of being the *alma mater* of Westcott and Lightfoot and of Burne Jones, the artist. Both at school and college in Cambridge I was able easily to win sufficient scholarships to carry on my studies not only independently but even to pay back into the family resources from time to time. The athletic life had a very great attraction for me all along.

While at the University, the passion of my early boyhood for adventure across the seas took possession of me, and became linked with a very deep religious conviction. At this critical moment a friendship came into my life which shaped the whole of my future history. Basil Westcott, the youngest son of the saintly old Bishop of Durham, became my most intimate college friend. He had decided to go out to the Cambridge University Mission in Delhi as a teacher.

This drew my attention to India as a possible field for my future life's work.

By 1896 I had become ordained and was deeply interested in the Labour Movement from the Christian social standpoint. Under this impulse, while waiting for a vacancy on the staff of my own college, I went to Sunderland in the North where I lived among the shipbuilders, but before long I moved down to the slums of South-east London, which was marked on Charles Booth's map as one of the black spots of poorer London. It was one of the thieves' quarters. The strain of work proved more than I could bear, and so when an opportunity came to go back to Cambridge as a Fellow of my college, I embraced it for health reasons.

At this time my friend, Basil Westcott, died at Delhi, while nursing a young British soldier who had been attacked by Asiatic cholera. And it seemed to me a sacred duty to go out to India and take up his work. Thus, I found myself on the way to Delhi.

At Delhi I taught English history and English literature to Indian students. But I soon became elected to the syndicate of the University, which brought me into touch with the leaders of Indian thought and opened my eyes to the great National Movement.

Some Indian leaders pointed out to me that the young white nations were all shutting their doors to Indian immigration while there was still being carried on in many of the colonies, a disgraceful form of indentured labour, which was little else than

\* Abridged from "My Life Story" by C. F. Andrews—published in the current number of the *Visva-Bharati Quarterly*.—Ed.

servitude. So when Lord Minto, who was then Viceroy of India, summoned me in 1906, to ask my opinion with regard to the immigration of Indians into Natal, I had urged vehemently upon him the folly of continuing this indentured immigration under such degrading conditions.

After 1912, this problem became the central fact in my life. By this time I had been attracted to the service of education in the school of Rabindranath Tagore at Santiniketan, but just before taking up this new work, the poet very nobly gave me leave to go out to South Africa to take part in the passive resistance struggle which Gandhiji was carrying out in Natal for the purpose of abolishing the £3 poll-tax. After the famous Smuts-Gandhi Agreement was signed, I went back to India more convinced than ever that the indentured system of Indian labour was not only a blunder, but a crime.

Some years afterwards I learnt from a Blue Book that the condition of indentured labourers in the Fiji Islands was worse than that in Natal. So I went there, Mr. W. W. Pearson accompanying me.

The next year the poet, Rabindranath Tagore, took me out with him as a companion to Japan and China. In 1917, I went out again to Fiji.

On my return to work at Santiniketan this Indo-Dominion subject occupied my attention. Also I was called in to arbitrate in labour matters. Thus, I found myself working now in India, now in Africa.

While at Santiniketan, I have learned from the Poet, more than anyone else, what the true genius of the East means, as compared with that of the West. In no sense does he condemn or despise the West. He holds that East and West must unite in mutual respect.

Side by side with this friendship with the poet, I have had the supreme happiness of a second personal friendship with Mahatma Gandhi. His marvellous spiritual genius has appealed to me in a very different way. Tagore is essentially a modern; Mahatma Gandhi is the St. Francis of Assisi of our own days.

Thus my life story has been, on the whole, a very romantic one.

### Obituary

While we are already in the press, death has taken another heavy toll and has removed from our midst two of our most esteemed friends. It is with a heavy heart that we have to announce the passing away of Surendranath Tagore and Kalimohan Ghose. Visva-Bharati has suffered an irreparable loss by their deaths. We express our deepest condolence with the bereaved whose grief we all personally share. May their souls rest in peace!

## A Story About Charlie Andrews

By A. G. Fraser

The noblest British Governor I have ever met, Sir Gordon Guggisberg, asked me once if I could arrange a meeting between him and Charlie, as he was most anxious to meet him. He wanted, if possible, to have him to lunch at his club, the Army and Navy Club, in Pall Mall. Knowing how particular that Club is as regards dress, I told Sir Gordon that Charlie might turn up in any sort of clothes. He said he did not care, so a lunch was fixed up. I was with Sir Gordon when the hall porter came and said, "Sir, there is a man at the door who says he has an appointment with you but I did not like to let him in till you had seen him." I said, "That's Andrews!" and we went to the door, and there he was worse dressed than I have ever seen him. Guggisberg welcomed him gladly and we went into lunch at a small table. Whilst we were eating admirals, generals, governors came up to the table to greet Sir Gordon and he introduced them all to Charlie. Then we retired to an alcove for quiet talk and Charlie's visit to British Guiana was fixed up. Then Charlie had to leave and Guggisberg saw him down to the street and put him in a taxi. Away Charlie went and Guggisberg followed the taxi with his eyes, his head bowed, till it was out of sight round a corner. There followed a silence, then he turned to me and said slowly, "I feel as though I had been honoured to give lunch to my Lord."

### S. SAHA, PHOTOGRAPHER

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